

Soviet emigre wave continues

TEL AVIV (R) — Thousands of Soviet Jewish immigrants landed in Israel Friday and Saturday in an airlift triggered by the uncertain political situation in the Soviet Union. Israel Radio said more than 3,500 Soviet Jews had landed at Tel Aviv airport since Friday morning and more were expected by Sunday. On Friday, the Israeli government told state airline officials to prepare all available planes for a major airlift of Soviet Jews from Bucharest, Budapest and Warsaw, transit points for Soviet Jews. There are no direct scheduled flights between Israel and the Soviet Union and no full diplomatic relations since Moscow broke ties over the 1967 war. "We have been urged by the minister of transport to make every possible aircraft available for this over the weekend and have obtained special permission to fly on the Sabbath (Saturday)," said Nachman Kleiman, spokesman for the state-owned airline El Al, Friday. The airlift followed the shock resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze Thursday, which raised fears among Jews that President Mikhail Gorbachev's liberal emigration policies might be reversed.

Jordan Times

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Turkey reinforces Iraqi border

ANKARA (AP) — Turkey has sent an additional 8,000 paratroopers to its border with Iraq and will add 1,500 infantry soldiers in coming days, a newspaper reported Saturday. The Istanbul daily Cumhuriyet also quoted unidentified military sources as saying that Iraq also increased its forces in the area. The Turkish paratroopers were sent to the border area in the past 10 days, the paper said. The 1,500 infantry soldiers will be transferred there from Thrace in northwestern Turkey, it said. Not counting the deployment reported by Cumhuriyet, Turkey has about 100,000 troops along the border with Iraq. Most were sent there shortly after Iraq invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2. No officials were available to confirm the Cumhuriyet report Saturday.

PFLP opens office in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AP) — The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) reopened its office in Baghdad Saturday, 11 years after it was closed by the Iraqi government following a split with Damascus. Abdul Rahim Malouh, a member of the PFLP's politburo, said reopening the office was meant to express solidarity with Iraq in its stand-off with the United States in the Gulf crisis. Malouh said the Damascus-based PFLP would fight alongside Iraq if war erupted, but he did not elaborate.

Gorbachev threatens tough measures

MOSCOW (R) — Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev Saturday threatened to use the full force of his powers unless leaders in the republics of Moldova and minority groups there act within 10 days to end ethnic conflict. Gorbachev, who has authority to send in troops and declare presidential rule over trouble-spots, warned of "necessary measures" but did not spell out action he has prepared to take. He issued a decree ordering the dissolution of two self-styled republics set up earlier this year by the southwestern republic's Turkish and Russian minorities.

Charles in Gulf

SAUDI ARABIA (R) — Prince Charles, heir to the British throne, said Saturday that his country's troops were ready for war in the Gulf. "They are highly professional and incredibly well-prepared," he told reporters at a forward base. He chartered with U.S. marines and then rode atop a challenger tank named "Churchill" for 15 kilometers across the sand to visit British armoured, engineering and infantry units.

Habre still a threat, Deby says

ALGIERS (R) — Ousted Chad President Hissene Habre could try to destabilise the country from exile, according to the man who overthrew him. In an interview with the official Algerian news agency, new President Idris Deby said Habre had "quite a large war chest (and) can undertake destabilisation action in Chad." Habre fled to Cameroun, Chad's neighbour to the southeast, and later to Senegal as rebels led by Deby and equipped by Libya seized control of his country last month.

Israel intercepts Lebanese ferry

SIDON, Lebanon (R) — An Israeli gunboat has intercepted a Lebanese ferry en route to Cyprus and detained eight Lebanese and Palestinian passengers, sources said Saturday. They said Israeli soldiers stopped the ferry Friday night off Sidon, 40 kilometers south of Beirut, and detained two Lebanese, including a policeman, and six Palestinians and escorted them to Israel.

Jordan disappointed over Resolution 681 — Qasem

It is an attempt to evade most basic issue

- *Passing reference to Jerusalem is deplorable*
- *Israel terrorising Palestinians to make room*

AMMAN (J.T.) — A U.N. Security Council resolution adopted Thursday criticising Israeli policies towards Palestinians is an attempt to evade the Middle East's most basic issue, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem said Saturday.

The U.N. Security Council resolution forms an attempt to prevent (the world from) confronting the basic issue in the Middle East and the possibility of providing solutions that would help in bolstering real and comprehensive peace in the region," Qasem said in a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Resolution 681 recommends measures to monitor treatment of Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories. But, after U.S. pressure, it mentioned only in a separate non-binding statement a call for an international conference to address the Palestinian issue.

Qasem said that under a pro-

gramme for the occupied territories the Israeli government was trying "to terrorise the Palestinian people in order to accommodate thousands of Soviet Jews."

Qasem deplored the fact that Resolution 681 made only passing reference in its introduction to Jerusalem as part of the Israeli-occupied territories.

"We really wished here in Jordan to see some members of the Security Council dealing with the Palestinian problem with the same momentum in which they dealt with the Gulf crisis," Qasem said.

Jordan rejects the double standard policy in dealing with issues in the Middle East," Qasem said. "International legitimacy should not be a selective process applied in one area and ignored in another."

"Resolution 681 is weak and void of its objective contents and lacked the seriousness needed for dealing effectively with the Middle East issue," the minister

said. "When some nations avoid considering Jerusalem as an integral part of the occupied Arab territories, it means that they are giving concessions to Israel, and it implies that they deal with the Jewish state on the basis of de facto situation, a status which Israel aims to consecrate," the minister said.

Jordan had wished to see the Security Council members dealing on equal footing with the Gulf crisis."

The minister criticised the way in which the council dealt with the idea of an international peace conference and said: "Jordan was not at all happy because the council ignored emphasising the need for convening an international peace conference and sufficed itself with a non-binding statement on the prospects for such a conference by

saying that the council reaffirms (Continued on page 5)

19 U.S. sailors die in Haifa ferry mishap

HAIFA (Agencies) — Nineteen U.S. sailors on shore leave from the Gulf crisis drowned within meters of their aircraft carrier on Saturday after a ferry returning them from Christmas revelry capsized in the Israeli port of Haifa.

A U.S. embassy spokesman revised the toll to 19 dead from 20 given earlier by his Ambassador William Brown, saying one victim had been counted twice.

The ferry with about 100 Americans from the USS Saratoga aboard sank within seconds under 1.5 metre high waves at midnight on Friday, U.S. and Israeli military officials said.

American and Israeli rescue teams searched through the night for the missing after the Israeli ferry Tuvia went under shortly after midnight in windy, choppy seas about 200 metres from the aircraft carrier Saratoga.

Forty-seven sailors were hospitalised and 38 rescued unharmed from choppy seas, according to Israel Radio. It said four were in serious condition and most of the others were released later Saturday morning.

It was the deadliest accident involving American servicemen taking part in the multinational

(Continued on page 5)

force arrayed against Iraq and raised the number of Americans taken on water in high seas, then suddenly overturned as it was hit by two large waves.

The sailors were among hundreds who spent their holiday Liberty Friday in Haifa, some with wives and girlfriends who had flown from home to meet them.

The Saratoga has a crew of about 1,500.

Army spokesman Ranan Gissen said six of the bodies were found trapped in the two-deck, 17-metre ferry about 21 metres below the surface of the Mediterranean.

Officials said at midafternoon that two other sailors still could be missing. Saratoga commanders called all 1,920 men from shore leave.

There was no official report on the cause of the sinking. Witnesses said they believed there were too many people in the back of the ferry.

Shaul Raziel, director of the Israel port authority, said a combination of events probably caused the accident. "The sea, or movement in one direction, a sudden wave, and the disaster happened," he told army radio.

Survivors interviewed in their

jury when he was hit in the water by one of the rescue boats.

Mary Mobley, wife of the Saratoga's captain, said information hot lines had been set up for crewmen's families in the United States and she appealed for relatives to stay calm while some 1,900 crewmen on shore were returned to the ship for a roll call.

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Mary Mobley, wife of the Saratoga's captain, said information hot lines had been set up for crew

Fahd rejects talk of oil wealth, says Saudis needy

RIYADH (AP) — King Fahd was quoted Saturday as rejecting charges that the oil-rich Arab country need to spread more of their wealth beyond their borders.

The Saudi monarch said he wondered why such calls to redistribute wealth were not heard from the richer countries some decades ago when Saudi Arabia was a nation of paupers.

He also said that Saudi Arabia, even though the world's largest oil-exporting nation, still needed to amass petroleum revenue for 15 to 20 years more to complete massive development projects started when the oil wealth surfaced.

"It is nothing new for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to hear the words 'distribution of wealth' behind which are many objectives but certainly none to benefit the Muslim," said Fahd in statements made while on a tour Friday of the holy city of Medina. The official Saudi Press Agency carried the statements overnight.

"But we wish to direct one question. Where were these making the call the days when these lands had no livelihood? Where were they when our fathers and forefathers were dying of hunger, those finding a date or some milk feeling they owned the world?" the king went on.

"Where is that world which today says the wealth must be distributed and where was that world when our lands were deserted and bare trees?"

Fahd did not name any country or leader involved in the charges but appeared to have at least Iraqi President Saddam Hussein in mind. "Many who are spreading that talk nowadays are those who were rich from old times, why then did they not note our conditions and say we have brothers on the peninsula in the desert who have nothing but trees and stones on which to survive?"

Iraq, home of one of the world's oldest civilisations in

Mesopotamia, is located at the northern tip of the Arabian Peninsula.

Among the reasons precipitating Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait were its demand for funds from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia to help rehabilitate the Iraqi economy after the battering it received in the war with Iran.

Fahd said that when oil was struck in Saudi Arabia, the wealth did not go waste: "It was spent on the homeland and the Saudi citizen to bring him to a good standard and we still need longer time and more funds."

The country was vast and "no one can say we have fulfilled our duty completely. We need tremendous amounts to complete over 10 or 15... or 20... years what remains in terms of roads, electricity, telephones, universities, schools and other aspects of life."

Added Fahd: "How can someone then say the kingdom has wealth which it does not know how to spend... those who want to come and see for themselves whether we are in need or not are welcome, and we affirm to them that we are needy."

He also stressed that Saudi Arabia has "fulfilled its duty" to Arab and Islamic countries in Asia and Africa but will not say how much until forced to do so. He estimated the world's Islamic population at present at 1.3 billion, 300,000 more than the commonly cited figure.

Oil wealth, the king further noted, was subject to ups and downs depending on prices.

He also said it was not correct to say the kingdom was reaping price of \$35-\$40 per barrel for the oil it has been selling since the Gulf crisis erupted and brought a shortfall of one million barrels per day of Kuwaiti and Iraqi crude oil to the market.

The kingdom's sale of light crude oil at record level sold for \$26, and the heavier is as low as \$15" a barrel, he said. The \$40 figure, attained during the first two months of the crisis, was for

the actively traded U.S. and North Sea crude oils.

Saudi Arabia is making huge oil profits from the Gulf crisis and should pay the full cost of the U.S. military operation there, two U.S. senators said.

"Saudi Arabia is reaping a windfall profit of \$52 billion on an annual basis because of the oil price increase since early August. The Saudis easily can afford to pay the full cost for our defense of their territory," Senator Larry Pressler, a South Dakota Republican, said at a news conference with Alfonse D'Amato, a New York Republi-

cian.

"While the U.S. is protecting Saudi Arabia, the Saudis are fattening their own pocketbooks," D'Amato said. "If not for the United States, Saudi Arabia would have become the 20th province of Iraq."

D'Amato and Pressler said they would introduce a Senate resolution calling on President George Bush to seek full payment from Saudi Arabia when Congress reconvenes on Jan. 3. A similar resolution will be introduced in the House of Repre-

sentatives.

They said Bush and other U.S. officials had been timid in seeking more support from Saudi Arabia.

The senators said the cost of the U.S. military operation, known as Operation Desert Shield, was estimated at \$30 billion over a full year. They said Saudi Arabia had contributed about \$1 billion so far to the U.S. effort.

The United States has sent about 280,000 troops to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region, along with ships, aircraft, tanks and other equipment and plans to increase its force to about 430,000.

D'Amato gave a letter seeking more support from Saudi Arabia to Saudi Ambassador Bandar Ben Sultan Thursday. He said Bandar understood the senators' position but could not make any commitments.

Aspin advocates sanctions with 'credible threat' against Iraq

WASHINGTON (USIA) — "Relying on sanctions is not the answer" to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, says U.S. House of Representatives Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin. He believes the best chance for a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis is a diplomatic effort backed up by "the credible threat" of military force.

During a speech at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) here Friday, Aspin noted that while the sanctions are working superbly... to an unprecedented degree," the question of whether they can work politically "is more problematical."

Aspin, whose committee recently held a series of hearings dealing with the Gulf crisis, said the international unity required to maintain the sanctions is likely to fracture before the embargo is able to force Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.

"Keeping up the requisite political, military and psychological pressure is a major stumbling block," he said. "Can we keep the alliance together and focused — especially focused — long enough for the sanctions to work politically? I judge the probability of that to be very low," Aspin said.

The lawmaker added that

although the sanctions are seriously affecting the Iraqi civilian population, their continuation will not necessarily translate into action on the part of Baghdad. "Pain to the Iraqi people is not the same thing as pain to Saddam Hussein," he said.

Regarding President Bush's decision to initiate high-level contacts with Iraq, Aspin said the announcement "raised the possibility of a diplomatic solution to the crisis." He added that negotiations could focus on issues beyond Iraqi compliance with the resolutions passed by the United Nations.

Aspin suggested that the United States "might... agree to a peace conference to discuss the Israeli-Arab-Palestinian issue. Or we might agree, as we already have, to negotiations between Iraq and Kuwait about the border after an Iraqi withdrawal."

"Some will not be happy with this conclusion," he said: "but I believe the test of a diplomatic solution is the extent of the compliance with the U.N. resolutions. A complete withdrawal by Saddam Hussein from Kuwait will be a victory almost regardless of what else is agreed upon around the edges. A partial withdrawal, of course, is only a partial victory."

He told the Iraqi ambassador, who was present at the CSIS forum, that after resolution of the current crisis, "then clearly we ought to try and deal with the Israel-Arab-Palestinian crisis. So, if you are concerned about getting that moving, I would suggest that if you pull out of Kuwait, we can get started on it a lot sooner."

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 14, Aqaba 22. Humidity readings: Amman 90 per cent, Aqaba 38 per cent

Aspin stressed that the "diplomatic option" would have to be supplemented with measures such as stricter controls on nuclear technology, an embargo on certain military items and "a continued multinational armed force in Kuwait."

Aspin also made clear that he was not advocating "linkage" of the Gulf crisis and the Arab-Israeli conflict. Indeed, during the question-and-answer period immediately following his speech, Aspin rejected the suggestion made by Iraqi Ambassador Mohamed Al Mashat, that Washington ought to push for a U.N. resolution "protecting the Palestinians."

Aspin noted that both Saddam and Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat have tried to link the two issues, but added that there is "no chance" of Washington's doing so.

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Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 641111

Civil Defence Immediate Response 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 581228

Blood Bank 775121

Traffic Police 843402

Police Security Department 683221

Police Complaints 605800

Water and Sewage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 767111

Al Asmaa pharmacy 637055

Narouk pharmacy 633272

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeissani pharmacy 637661

Central Amman Telephone 010230

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 010230

Home News

Jordan, India to boost trade

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan will purchase Indian goods worth \$60 million annually in exchange for an increase in India's imports of Jordanian fertilisers, phosphate and potash, according to an agreement reached between the two sides during a visit to New Delhi by a Jordanian economic delegation.

Delegation leader Ibrahim Badran said, in a statement upon returning here Saturday at the end of the week-long visit and talks on promoting bilateral cooperation in trade and economic fields, that talks were focused on promoting bilateral cooperation in trade and economic fields.

"India will sell Jordan agricultural and industrial products and will offer contracting services to the Kingdom at international competitive prices, and has agreed to cooperate with Jordan to organise trade exhibitions for promoting the national Jordanian and Indian products in New Delhi and Amman," Badran said in his statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

He said that in return India would increase its imports of Jordanian phosphate from 1.5 million tonnes to 1.8 million annually, would buy 500,000 tonnes of potash and would increase its imports of Jordanian fertilisers from 350,000 to 450,000 tonnes annually.

The two sides reviewed areas where they could launch joint

ventures employing Jordanian raw materials and Indian expertise and markets, Badran, who is also Minister of Industry and Trade's secretary-general, said.

He said that the two sides had agreed to follow up the implementation of a joint Jordanian-Indian project for the production of phosphate-based phosphoric acid at the rate of nearly 200,000 tonnes annually.

He said that the Indian government had given its consent to set up the project in conjunction with Jordan and also agreed to purchase the acid produced at the project's site near the Shidieh phosphate mine in southern Jordan.

He said that the two sides would formally sign documents for the implementation of the project in February 1991. The two sides, he added, reviewed India's small- and medium-sized industries, and agreed that India should provide expertise to Jordan in these fields with the aim of encouraging local investors to set up national Jordanian industries that would conform to the country's needs under the present circumstances.

Badran said that the two sides had also agreed to stimulate tourism and to sign a protocol on tourism at a later date. India, he added, has agreed to provide Jordan with expertise concerning education and vocational training related to the tourism industry.



KING VISITS PRIME MINISTRY: His Majesty King Hussein Saturday visited the Prime Ministry where he met with Prime Minister Mudar Badran in the presence of Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker. King Hussein was briefed on the economic and financial situation in the Kingdom. His Majesty asked the government to look for new markets for the various Jordanian products and gave directives on

several issues of interest to the country and its citizens. The King also visited the Armed Forces General Command where he was received by Chief of Staff General Fathi Abu Taleb, his assistants, the commander of the Royal Air Force and the inspector general. The King held a meeting with Abu Taleb and discussed with him issues of interest to the Armed Forces. The meeting was attended by Ben Shaker.

Education budget accounts for 8 per cent of total fiscal budget

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Education's annual budget accounts for nearly eight per cent of the total fiscal budget for the country, and it spends nearly six per cent of the Kingdom's gross national product on education at various levels, according to Minister of Education and Higher Education Mohammad Hamdan.

Jordan along with other developing nations of the world, has witnessed an increase of nearly 75 per cent expenditures on education compared with the advanced nations whose increase of education was estimated at 50 per cent, the minister said in an address to the opening session of a symposium on "educational wastage and economics of education" which is being organised here by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in cooperation with the Ministry of Education in Jordan.

The symposium, attended by 35 participants representing various institutions and the Ministry of Education, would be reviewing working papers dealing with the subject of education economics which is being discussed for the first time in Jordan.

The two-day symposium will also deal with the present educational system in Jordan, wastage

of effort in education, expenditure on education in schools and options for education investments.

The minister told the meeting that the second half of the present century had witnessed increasing concern over the universalisation of basic education, but the last part of the 20th century necessitates rationalisation in expenditure which means examining ways to minimise wastage specially in view of the present economic recession.

"The resolutions of the Thailand conference on 'Education for All' held in March 1990 called for improving the quality of education and ensuring basic education for all children by the year 2000, and this calls for reducing spending in line with the available resources," Hamdan added. He said that the present symposium was expected to serve the goals set by the 1987 educational conference held in Jordān which called for creating a balance between available resources and population in the new educational system.

UNESCO Director in Jordan Mohammad Kazem told the opening session that the Arab World was in real need for care-

ful planning of educational economics.

Arab countries spend an average of 6.6 per cent of the gross national product on education,

but this rate rises in some countries like Algeria, Morocco, Yemen and Libya to 25 per cent. Kasem, who underlined the importance of investment in education, said that a 60 per cent increase in gross national product in the United States proved to be due to an increase in investments in education.

In the Arab World, Kasem

said, the number of students will

rise to 74 million by the year 2000 compared to 45 million in 1988. He cited a UNESCO study in the early 1970s which said that the Arab schools witness student drop out of 40 per cent in the primary stage, compared to 33 per cent in 1990.

A ministry official said in a statement that studies were being conducted on the cost of teaching an individual student at the compulsory and secondary stages as well as students at the vocational training centres operated by the Ministry of Education. Vocational training, he added, will be among the topics to be reviewed by the working papers at the present symposium.

According to informed sources, Jordan and the U.S.

were trying to figure out a way to ensure that Jordan-bound goods were not intercepted by the enforcers of the embargo. This process involves prior notification to the American navy of details of goods coming to Jordan such as the importers' name or the purpose for which the goods would be used.

"More than anything else, the Americans are seeking individual Jordanian guarantees for each consignment that would not be diverted to Iraq or used in any industry that would cater to the Iraqis," said a source.

The Americans have com-

plied a list of Jordanian importers who have been doing business with Iraq (prior to the imposition of the trade sanctions)," said the source.

"We have shipped thousands of vehicles of evacuees through

Aqaba, and this is the first time that they (American warships) have blocked a ship carrying them," Ardekhan said.

No American official was available for comment on the issue.

Seminar held on handicap detection

AMMAN (J.T.) — The institute for Child Health and Development Sunday opens a two-day seminar on the prevention and early detection of handicaps in preschool children.

The seminar aims to inform professionals in the health field and people working in the area of mother and child care, about the nature of the work at the institute, and new advances in the field of the prevention and early detection of handicaps in preschool children.

The Institute for Child Health and Development is a joint Jordanian-Swedish project being implemented by the Noot Al Hussein Foundation and the Swedish Save the Children (Radda Barnen).

This seminar is the first in a

series that aims at increasing the awareness of professionals involved in mother and child care services about the early signs of problems in children's central nervous systems.

The seminar will include presentations on early screening of problems that could affect fetal development, and detection of cerebral palsy in children in their first year, as well as precautions to take in order to avoid diseases that may lead to the damaging of the central nervous system.

Attending the seminar will be representatives from the Ministry of Health, UNICEF, UNRWA, the Cerebral Palsy Foundation, King Hussein Medical City, and the Institute for Child Health and Development (CHD).

The new chief editor of Sawi Al Shaab is Hashem Khreisat, president of the Jordan Press Association and director of the editorial staff at Al Ra'i Arabic daily as a columnist.

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Khreisat, elected Jordan Press Association president in March 1988, is expected to take up his new post by January 1, 1990, according to a decision taken by the Sawi Al Shaab board of directors.

Khreisat has worked for Al Ra'i Arabic daily for the past 18 years before accepting the new post after months of pressure.



Hashem Khreisat

House holds 12th session

AMMAN (Petra) — The Lower House of Parliament Sunday holds its 12th session in the presence of the Cabinet to hear Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem's reply to a query by Deputy Ahmad Abbadi about the Foreign Ministry's recent internal changes.

The deputy had requested that the minister provide the House with a briefing on the recent transfers among ministry officials and on those retired.

The House will also review other matters raised by the public and a request by Deputy Fuad Khalafat about the Audit Bureau work and its relations with the other government departments.

National charter finalised Monday

AMMAN (Petra) — The general commission entrusted with preparing a national charter will hold a meeting Monday to endorse the charter's final version.

Commission Chairman Ahmad Obeidat said that the various aspects of the charter had already been discussed in full and the Monday meeting was only a formality for official

The House is also expected to hear a set of recommendations from the Palestine Committee concerning the status of the residents of the occupied Gaza Strip in Jordan and a report by Minister of Agriculture Suleiman Arabyat about agricultural loans to farmers.

The House's various committees are meanwhile continuing side-meetings whose results will be referred to the House at a later date.

The House will also review other matters raised by the public and a request by Deputy Fuad Khalafat about the Audit Bureau work and its relations with the other government departments.

Boxing day is Children's day at the Hotel Jordan Inter-Continental

BOXING DAY

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Change in name

ONE SHOULD not fall into the trap of reading too much into the resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. To begin with, Shevardnadze has been the right hand man of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, and as long as the president is still at the helm, the influence of the departing foreign minister and like-minded Soviet officials is not going to wane. As Shevardnadze is part of Gorbachev's inner circle, it is hard to believe that his resignation is not something that was carefully orchestrated to drive home a certain signal. It is common knowledge that Gorbachev is waging a battle for his political life and needs a catalyst to wage a war on the diehard conservatives still lingering in the Soviet system and possibly hoping for a comeback. It was no surprise, therefore, when Moscow announced that the departing foreign minister is indispensable and will stay on in a different capacity that would bring him even closer to the centre of Soviet power. It is no longer far-fetched to imagine that Shevardnadze would even be groomed to succeed Gorbachev in the future. There is really no ground to interpret the departure of Shevardnadze as a signal that Moscow is about to amend its ways and policies especially towards the West and the Arab World. The coordinates of Soviet external and internal politics are determined by a set of harsh economic and political realities from which Moscow can no longer extricate itself without some kind of a Marshall plan from Washington and its allies. With the Soviet economic and political structures near collapse, Moscow needs more than ever the support of the "haves" in the world, whether in the West or in the Gulf region. The International Monetary Fund has recently calculated that the Soviet Union needs quite a few billions of dollars in the course of 1991 just to feed itself and stay afloat. Everybody knows that such a huge aid package to be extended to Moscow, the leadership there will be requested to go full speed ahead with its reform and restructuring plans. But Moscow's woes do not end there. With the fifteen republics composing the USSR gravitating towards greater independence, the Soviet president and close aides need to regroup in order to maintain a semblance of cohesion inside the frontiers of their superpower. There is no way the various republics can win their struggle for more independence without the aid and support of Western countries. Clearly, Moscow cannot afford to alienate Washington at this critical time for fear of losing all. No wonder then that the Soviet leaders have been towing Washington's line at every turn especially in the Gulf region. Who ever thought that the USSR could be defensive of the massive deployment of U.S. troops right next door to its southern flank, let alone being supportive of such build-up. The rules of the game have certainly changed for the Soviet Union and there is little hope of reversing the tide for as long as one can see. To pin hope on the artificial departure of Shevardnadze from the outward political scene in Moscow would be utterly over-optimistic and tantamount to wishful thinking. It would be far more prudent to calculate one's moves on the international theatre with this in mind.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Al Ra'i's daily newspaper Saturday dwelt on Israel's reactions to the resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and said that the unexpected move brought about feverish actions in Israel which is now mobilising all possible means of transport to ensure the immigration of the largest possible number of Soviet Jews. Israel is in a hurry and in a race against time to bring in the Jews, lest there will be speedy change in Soviet policies regarding the emigration issue, the paper noted. It said that Israel is making ready now to absorb more than a million Jews from the Soviet Union, but is at the same time apprehensive that the foreign minister's resignation would bring the emigration to a halt. The paper called on the Arab countries to beware of the looming danger represented in the influx of Jews in the occupied Arab lands where they are to be settled because there is a real danger that the Jews would want to acquire more land at the expense of the Arab World. The Arabs should seize the opportunity of the loss of Israel's friend and call on the Soviet leadership to halt the emigration as soon as possible, a process which is harming the Palestinian cause. The paper also urged the Arab countries which are aligning themselves behind the United States in the Gulf crisis to seize the opportunity to demand that Moscow work for an international conference and implement U.N. Security Council resolutions concerning the Middle East and the Palestine issue.

A columnist in Al Ra'i's daily reminds his readers that the U.N. Security Council resolution passed Thursday concerning protection for the Palestinians and convening an international peace conference came about as a direct result of Washington's fear of a rift within the Western alliance vis-a-vis Iraq. Therefore, we assume that it is due to Iraq that the Council has taken such a resolution and not as a result of the Arab countries' pressure on the U.S. administration which supported the vote, says Tareq Masarweh. Again, it is because of America's wish to reward Cairo that the U.S. administration has decided to write off Egypt's billions of dollars debts, a move followed by the Gulf states which took a similar move, says the writer. It is because of Iraq and its firm stand with regard to Arab rights and justice that the Soviet Union has benefited from the oil wealth by receiving millions of dollars in aid from the Gulf state while Washington improved its ties with Peking and opened talks with Cuba, a country with a long standing hostility towards the United States, says the writer. Therefore, he adds, only through a strong political stand and through linking the Gulf issue with the Palestine question that Iraq has been able to force the United States to change its policies, and not by kissing the hands of the American masters. It is Iraq and not the Arab mercenary countries which brought about a change, at a time when the whole world is going through a dark chapter of its history, says the writer.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

The anatomy of farmers' debts

By Dr. Fahed Faneck

THE intricacies of farmers' debts and how to rearrange these debts is a source of fascination to politicians in Jordan. The government periodically makes decisions to relieve farmers from parts of their debts by forgiving interest or re-scheduling the principal or at least talking about it.

Today the Lower House of Parliament will debate the issue of farmers' debts. The deputies will call for the immediate rescue of the farmers, and the government will pretend to be sympathetic and will promise to do something about it as soon as the financial situation allows a move in that direction.

The total debt of the agriculture sector is currently in the neighbourhood of JD 100 million, of which JD 35 million was extended by the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC), JD 5 million by the Jordanian Cooperation Organisation (JCO), JD 50 million by commercial banks, and JD 10 million by middlemen, individuals and loan sharks.

Lending and repaying of loans is of course a continuous operation, because lending institutions re-lend to the different agricultural sectors amounts equal to or exceeding repayments. Therefore the actual cost of the debt is the interest paid which could be roughly estimated at JD 8 million per annum. This amount forms six per cent of the value added in the agricultural sector, or three per cent of the gross agricultural output.

This is obviously a small percentage. It indicates that the agricultural sector, taken as a whole, is not involved in heavy

indebtedness. On the contrary, it indicates that the agricultural sector is not getting its fair share of financing, and that the interest payable is not an excessive burden relative to the size of the operation.

However, one must realise that discussing the agricultural sector as a whole does not necessarily have the same implications as discussing the status of farmers and even peasants.

As a matter of fact, the commercial banks do not deal with farmers, much less with peasants. The amount that appears as agricultural credit in commercial banks' financial statistics is related to credit facilities extended to companies and business firms in Amman and other regional capitals to finance their imports and stocks of agricultural equipment and machinery, and other agricultural material, such as seeds, fertilisers and pesticides and other tradeable agricultural inputs.

The Jordan Cooperative Organisation's total debts are JD 10 million, but these debts includes bad debts due from cooperative societies that do not exist any more, or are not economically active. Another part went to housing, consumption and other forms of cooperatives that are not related in any way to agriculture.

The loans of the Agricultural Credit Cooperation are essentially a source of credit to farmers not peasants. I mean large-scale farmers who are not personally involved in agriculture. They are

simply landlords who borrow cheap money on the pretext that they will develop their property. Some of those posing as farmers are actually sitting in the Lower and Upper Houses of Parliament. They will be eloquent in defending the poor farmers while they are defending their own self interest and trying to get richer embezzling public funds. Those big farmers prefer to borrow from the ACC to take advantage of the subsidised funds, hoping that one day the government will write off the debt or forgive the interest. In my estimate, the share of the small farmers is not more than JD 7 million, or 20 per cent of ACC's total outstanding credit.

Thus the peasants and small farmers who really deserve help are indebted by JD 17 million, of which JD 10 million is provided by middlemen, individuals and loan sharks.

The partial debt relief and re-scheduling that may be granted to the agricultural sector will be utilised by the landlords at the expense of the small farmers and real producers. The end result is to paralyse the Agricultural Credit Corporation, and curtail its capacity to recycle funds. This will reflect badly on small farmers who really need credit to finance their production. We claim that any relief granted to farmers across the board or with debts in excess of JD 5000 will amount to a gift from public funds to those who do not deserve it.

This is the map of the agricultural debt which politicians like to say represents a crisis, while we actually need more of it.

Gulf forces need better tactics if they plan to evict Iraq

By John Fullerton
Reuter

CAIRO — U.S.-led forces massed against Iraq could suffer unacceptable heavy losses in their first assault unless strategy is substantially improved, military analysts say.

They believe artillery, armour and combat engineering all need improvement before trying to force Iraq to end its occupation of Kuwait.

The United Nations has set Jan. 15 as the deadline for Iraq to leave the emirate it took over on Aug. 2.

Army Lieutenant-General Calvin Waller, deputy commander of U.S. forces in the Gulf, said in Riyadh it could be as late as mid-February before some 430,000 U.S. troops in the area would be ready for attack.

But the analysts said that even after U.S. and allied reinforcements arrive there will be loopholes in strategy which will have to be closed.

Live-fire training involving air and ground forces was needed to improve coordination among the various arms and services in the multinational effort.

The Iraqis have had more than four months to prepare fortified defences in Kuwait since their invasion.

The analysts said the ability of allied air power to overcome the minefields, bunkers and obstacles ahead of a ground assault should not be overestimated.

For example, bombing might simply scatter Iraqi anti-tank and anti-personnel mines rather than destroy them.

Some analysts predicted very heavy losses in the first few hours of any attempted breakthrough, particularly by infantry mounted in thin-skinned Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs).

"I believe there will be more casualties during the assault (by mechanised infantry and tanks) than in any other area of combat," said independent

U.S. military analyst Ken Brower.

While tanks and infantry vehicles work together on the battle field, providing mutual protection, Brower said better protection was needed for the infantry if it was to get on top of Iraqi trenches and bunkers and silence anti-tank weapons.

"There is no point in having 10 (infantry) men behind one inch of armour trying to protect four (tank) men behind 20 inches of armour," Brower said.

Former Israeli tank commander and military researcher Ze'ev Eytan said current Israeli strategy was to place infantry groups in centurion tanks, shorn of their turrets, to provide more protection.

The small British contingent had ample engineers to destroy or bridge Iraq's defensive belt but the U.S. armoured forces were weak in this respect, the analysts said.

Brower said the U.S. M1-A1 Abrams tank — the cream of the armour on the allied side

— could not carry vital bulldozer blades, rollers or ploughs to deal with obstacles because its front suspension was too soft.

The U.S. marines' M-60A3 tanks were properly equipped in this regard but their armour was vulnerable at virtually any range to advanced anti-tank ammunition, he said.

German, American, British and Israeli analysts interviewed by Reuters agreed that the American M1-A1 and the British Challenger tanks were superior in firepower to their Iraqi counterpart, the T-72.

But the spearhead of any allied ground assault would be small — some six armoured divisions — against 30 Iraqi divisions of both modern and vintage Soviet-designed tanks.

The allies were also outgunned both in the number and range of Iraq's Soviet and Western-built artillery. "Their artillery has a longer reach than ours," said Christopher Foss, military editor of Jane's Defence Weekly.

Gulf will host foreign forces for years

By Neil MacFarquhar
The Associated Press

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia — No matter what the outcome of the Gulf crisis, a long-term foreign military presence will be needed to ensure stability in the region. Saudi and foreign military experts say.

There are varying views about the shape of the foreign presence and how long it will have to stay, but the experts agree it will take years until the Saudi military and armies of other Gulf states are able to protect their own territories.

Much depends on the time Saudi Arabia will need to overcome its manpower shortages and build an army large enough to eliminate the need for foreign protection.

Saudi Arabia plans to more than double the size of their armed forces over the next few years and buy up to \$20 billion worth of U.S. weaponry.

"We'll build up our armed forces to the point of adequate and absolute deterrent to any aggression," said Prince Fahd bin Abdallah, the deputy defense minister.

Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia's quick request for outside help.

showed how unprepared the Saudis and their neighbours were to defend themselves despite massive spending on advanced weapon systems over the last decade.

The invasion also woke the Gulf states to the harsh reality that they could no longer afford the squabbling and minimal security cooperation that had characterised their relations in the past.

The ruling Al Saud family had avoided creating a large army, fearing a competing centre of power. The 67,000-man regular forces and the 55,000-strong paramilitary National Guard were formed to balance each other.

Military experts say the Saudis will need external military support for four to 20 years until they can properly defend themselves. Iraq boasts a military force of 1 million.

Although Saudi Arabia has promised domestic Islamic conservatives that U.S. troops will leave as soon as the Gulf crisis is over, future security arrangements in the Gulf will undoubtedly involve the United States.

Thousands of American military personnel are expected to remain in the region on "training missions" to help the Saudis

absorb the new weapons, including about 700 M1A1 tanks and dozens of F-15 fighter planes.

More than 250,000 U.S. troops are now based in Saudi Arabia as part of the multinational force sent to the kingdom to deter Iraq.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has talked of the need for a new security structure in the region once the Kuwait crisis has been settled.

Observers say the most likely shape for a long-term force based in Saudi Arabia is one with foreign troops, possibly Americans, working under a U.N. flag, stationed around Kuwait's border.

The smaller emirates would likely provide shore facilities for foreign navies, much as they did during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war.

"We're going to have to cooperate on security, definitely," Secretary-General Abdallah Bishara of Kuwait said in an interview.

If Iraq pulls out with its military intact, Iraq will remain a major threat to Saudi Arabia and the vulnerable Gulf monarchies.

The region can never find the same tranquility as before. There's been so much rancor, so

much movement of people," said a Western military official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The Saudis also see other potential threats.

To the south, last May's merger of north and south Yemen has created a new regional force. The new Yemeni republic's 10,000 people outnumber Saudi Arabia's 8 million indigenous people.

Yemen's backing for Iraq prompted the kingdom to expel hundreds of thousands of Yemenis who had been working in Saudi Arabia.

Traditional enmity has long prevented them from marking their common border and the Saudis plan to build new military bases there.

To the north, Jordan has also backed Iraq politically, despite its adherence to U.N. sanctions imposed after the invasion of Kuwait.

While Saudi Arabia's support for the Palestinian cause has always been more financial than military, the Arab-Israeli conflict is also a major source of regional instability.

"They see themselves surrounded by enemies," said a Western diplomat.

Instead, it was relegated to a non-binding Council statement and thereby prevented Israel, which feels a large conference would be biased against it, from being in violation of a specific Council demand.

But it was the first time the

Lebanon's new premier... 'a lamb among wolves'

By Nadim Ladki
Reuter

BEIRUT — Omar Karami, chosen prime minister as Lebanon struggles towards peace, is a relative newcomer to office but his political roots run deep in a Sunni Muslim family which has led the northern port city of Tripoli for decades.

He is expected to form a "national reconciliation" cabinet including warlords of the religious and political militias that have been tearing the country to pieces for 15 years.

"He will be a lamb among wolves. His only strength will be his excellent relation with Syria," said one politician.

Born in 1936, Karami became

close ally of Syria and opposed Christian domination of the political system in the years when a shifting population balance made it more difficult to sustain.

But he also opposed violence and, unlike other Lebanese chieftains, never formed his followers into a private army.

Back in 1953, Rashid Karami was one of the leaders of a six-month civil war that led to a U.S. military intervention.

He became prime minister a year later and was in and out of office for nearly 30 years, heading 10 different cabinets.

The only official post Omar Karami has held was education minister under Prime Minister Selim Hoss in a cabinet formed

Qasem

(Continued from page 1)

its determination to support an active negotiating process in which all relevant parties should participate leading to a comprehensive just and lasting peace to the Arab-Israeli conflict and that an international conference be held at an appropriate time.

"Only a mere reference to the international conference was unbinding for any party, and the resolution was weaker than expected. We believe that the Security Council, which is entrusted with ensuring world security and stability, should force all the concerned parties to reach a peaceful solution based on international legitimacy which demands an Israeli withdrawal from all occupied territories: The West Bank, Arab Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Golani Heights, southern Lebanon and occupied Jordanian territories."

The minister criticised "the double standard dealings with the region's problems" and said that "the single criteria for dealing with questions related to occupation of other countries by force should be imposed on Israel to force it to withdraw its forces from the occupied Arab territories because there should be no double standard in dealing with international principles, specially those principles connected with peace in the Middle East."

The minister said that the council should not impose certain standard in one area and exclude it from another.

Qasem said that the council took one and a half months to reach Resolution 681, "which was supposed to have dealt with the deteriorating situation in the occupied Palestinian territories where the Israelis continue to impose their repressive measures on the Palestinian people."

"What is happening in the occupied territories," he said, "is a flagrant violation of international law. It is a tragedy and a dangerous problem, which constitutes the root cause of all tensions in the Middle East region."

He said that Resolution 681 "is considered as an attempt by the council to avoid direct handling of the situation in a manner that would provide solutions to help bring about a just and comprehensive peace to the region."

Qasem said that the draft resolution submitted by four delegations dealing with the situation in occupied Palestine had won approval of all the council members with the exception of one.

That draft, he said, contained a paragraph stressing that Arab Jerusalem is an integral part of the occupied Arab territories but regrettably this did not appear in the council resolution which was voted on Dec. 20.

"The council resolution is in fact a major retreat creating a complicated situation impeding the efforts to reach a just and comprehensive settlement to the Palestine problem and the Arab-Israeli conflict because Arab Jerusalem is part of the West Bank and its area covers more than one quarter of the West Bank," the minister noted.

He said that the wording of the resolution was extremely weak and it is easily seen that the text was rendered void of its objective and serious contents that would be needed to deal with the issue.

Qasem said the fourth article

of the council's resolution urged the Israeli government to accept the jure applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to all the territories occupied by Israel since 1967 and to abide scrupulously by the provisions of the convention.

This article, he said, was best described by one diplomat at the Security Council who assured Israel that the resolution was extremely weak and has no significant meaning at all.

Qasem said that most of the articles of the resolution focused on calling on Israel to abide by the Geneva Convention and expressed the council's dismay over Israel's non-adherence to a previous resolution. "But what was needed from the council was an outright condemnation of Israel's terrorist actions against the Palestinians who are struggling for their basic rights," he said.

The minister said that any observer of the events can easily understand the Israeli government's programme and its repressive measures in the occupied territories where it is trying to absorb an influx of Jewish immigrants from the Soviet Union to settle them in place of the uprooted Palestinians.

The Israeli government maintains that the land of Israel is non-negotiable because it alleges that it is linked to the concept of Israel and its right to land and to peace, he noted. In Israel's view its land is that of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, the minister said.

Qasem called on the international community to consider Israel's policies as mediated and not coming as a reaction to natural Palestinian resistance activity. He said Israel's practices aim at creating suitable conditions for expelling the Palestinians from their homeland.

The massacre committed by Israeli forces near Al Aqsa Mosque in October falls within this Israeli policy, the minister added.

"We had hoped that the Security Council would decide to send international observers to monitor the situation in the occupied territories but all efforts were made to abort such a move," the minister said.

"Israel's current drive to evict the Palestinians from their homeland is mainly aimed at absorbing more immigrants and there is an intensive programme for setting up settlements in the occupied lands, including Jerusalem, to absorb the immigrants and to obliterate all Arab and Islamic heritage."

"Israeli government officials' statements, he said, stand as a clear witness to this official policy. He cited Israel's housing minister as saying lately that he will make available 250,000 housing units between 1990 and 1991 for the newcomers."

This, Qasem said, clearly means that Israel aims at absorbing more than a million immigrants in the coming 18 months and means also that Israel will greatly benefit from escalating the crises in the region to facilitate the implementation of its plans at the expense of Arab rights.

Benjedid

(Continued from page 1)

believed there were "margins" to avoid war and that Italy was "participating currently in work to avoid a recourse to military means."

While he did not elaborate,

government sources who would not be further identified, said Italy, as current president of European Community, was working with Algeria to seek a peaceful outcome of the Gulf crisis.

Governments of the European Community have held out the possibility of last-chance direct discussions with Baghdad if the proposed dialogue between the United States and Iraq collapses.

Italy will end its community presidency Dec. 31, and will be succeeded by Luxembourg. But

under the "troika" system, the previous and successive foreign ministers of the community presidency remain in a coordinating foreign policy role.

Benjedid later repeated his plea for cooperation to reach a peaceful settlement Saturday during a brief visit to Spain.

Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez and Foreign Minister Francisco Fernandez Ordóñez greeted Benjedid at Madrid's Barajas airport, where he arrived from talks in Paris.

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Bush

(Continued from page 1)

Muslims?" Saddam asked a German television interviewer.

"Have you ever thought that the Americans could lose? This is what we believe... God is on our side."

The interview, recorded on Thursday and broadcast Friday, included some of Saddam's grimmest words since the early days of the Gulf crisis.

U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills put the odds at just one in four.

Still, Hills, who gave her assessment at a recent staff meeting, is ready to resume discussions to reform the 107-nation General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), but only if European nations make concessions on the theory of subsidies to farmers. The talks collapsed earlier this month over that issue.

"When 5,000 American soldiers have fallen at the latest, Bush will have to end such a war, not because his soldiers are bad but because Bush is a bad leader," Saddam said.

U.S. National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft said that Jan. 15 was purely an "authorisation date" and "not an attack day at all."

The U.N. resolution "doesn't say (Iraq) is going to be attacked this date or that date or whatever," the national security adviser said, adding: "One of the important points we're trying to get across to (Iraq) is that we haven't blinked so far, we're not blinking now and we will not blink."

In other Gulf developments:

— Kings and sheikhs of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) opened their annual summit Saturday seeking a combined strategy for liberating Kuwait and protecting the oil-rich region.

The emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani in opening remarks denounced "Iraqi aggression" against Kuwait and demanded an unconditional Iraqi withdrawal. He insisted that the exiled Al Sabah family be reinstated in the emirate.

— Keen to see all peaceful avenues exhausted, we welcomed the initiative of U.S. President George Bush for direct talks with Iraq, hoping that the Iraqi leader would listen to reason and spare the region the perils of war," the sheikh said in a brief address.

"Iraq upset all balances and disturbed the rules of Arab bonds as well as the essence of Gulf security," he said.

— Attending the summit were King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, the exiled emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahyan, Sultan Qaboos of Oman and Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa Ben Salman Al Khalifa of Bahrain, who is sitting in for his brother the emir, Sheikh Isa.

Shortly before the summit got under way, a Kuwaiti minister stressed interest in a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis so as to "spare bloodshed and avert destruction," Andreotti said.

The minister of state for foreign affairs, Sheikh Nasser Mohammad Al Ahmad, said he was responding to "statements by some Arab officials" about Iraq being ready for a face-saving conciliatory solution provided Iraq can keep its "dignity and honour."

The government has said it would hold a parliamentary debate on the Gulf sometime between Jan. 8 and Jan. 11.

U.S. analysts pessimistic on prospects for new trade talks

By Robert Tramman

Reuter

WASHINGTON — The chief U.S. trade negotiator is pessimistic on the chances of success for any new talks to reform world trade.

U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills put the odds at just one in four.

Still, Hills, who gave her assessment at a recent staff meeting, is ready to resume discussions to reform the 107-nation General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), but only if European nations make concessions on the theory of subsidies to farmers. The talks collapsed earlier this month over that issue.

"When 5,000 American soldiers have fallen at the latest, Bush will have to end such a war, not because his soldiers are bad but because Bush is a bad leader," Saddam said.

U.S. National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft said that Jan. 15 was purely an "authorisation date" and "not an attack day at all."

The U.N. resolution "doesn't say (Iraq) is going to be attacked this date or that date or whatever," the national security adviser said, adding: "One of the important points we're trying to get across to (Iraq) is that we haven't blinked so far, we're not blinking now and we will not blink."

In other Gulf developments:

— Kings and sheikhs of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) opened their annual summit Saturday seeking a combined strategy for liberating Kuwait and protecting the oil-rich region.

The emir of Qatar, Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani in opening remarks denounced "Iraqi aggression" against Kuwait and demanded an unconditional Iraqi withdrawal. He insisted that the exiled Al Sabah family be reinstated in the emirate.

— Keen to see all peaceful avenues exhausted, we welcomed the initiative of U.S. President George Bush for direct talks with Iraq, hoping that the Iraqi leader would listen to reason and spare the region the perils of war," the sheikh said in a brief address.

"Iraq upset all balances and disturbed the rules of Arab bonds as well as the essence of Gulf security," he said.

— Attending the summit were King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, the exiled emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahyan, Sultan Qaboos of Oman and Prime Minister Sheikh Khalifa Ben Salman Al Khalifa of Bahrain, who is sitting in for his brother the emir, Sheikh Isa.

Shortly before the summit got under way, a Kuwaiti minister stressed interest in a peaceful settlement of the Gulf crisis so as to "spare bloodshed and avert destruction," Andreotti said.

The minister of state for foreign affairs, Sheikh Nasser Mohammad Al Ahmad, said he was responding to "statements by some Arab officials" about Iraq being ready for a face-saving conciliatory solution provided Iraq can keep its "dignity and honour."

The government has said it would hold a parliamentary debate on the Gulf sometime between Jan. 8 and Jan. 11.

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1990

PLO disowns Hourani's criticism of Shevardnadze

TUNIS (R) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Saturday distanced itself from criticism of Soviet foreign policy, saying remarks by a PLO Executive Committee member did not represent the views of the organisation as a whole.

Abdullah Hourani, an independent member of the 15-man leadership, told Reuters Friday that outgoing Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze had adopted "provocative attitudes" on Arab issues. The PLO hoped his departure would lead to a more balanced and less pro-American Soviet policy, he said.

But an unnamed official PLO spokesman, in a statement released by the PLO news agency WAFA, said:

"Abdullah Hourani's remarks on the latest internal changes in the Soviet Union do not express the opinion of the PLO. The organisation believes that these changes are a purely internal Soviet affair."

A Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman said Thursday that the minister's resignation was

final but other Soviet officials have said since he might stay on in some capacity.

In a separate statement the PLO spokesman said a U.N. Security Council resolution passed Saturday on protecting Palestinians

The U.N. Security Council unanimously endorsed efforts to protect Arabs in the Israeli-occupied territories, denounced Israel for expelling Palestinians and, in a separate statement, backed a Middle East peace conference at an appropriate time.

"The PLO believes that the resolution is insufficient and does not match the extent of the massacres, repressive practices and barbaric aggressions which the Israeli authorities perpetrate daily against the Palestinian people," he said.

"It is regrettable that the Security Council should be forced to comply with American pressures after about 59 days of U.S. procrastination designed to obstruct the resolution or make it devoid of substance."

U.S. military muscles

WASHINGTON (R) — A thumbnail look at current U.S. military strength in the Gulf and Mediterranean. Three more carriers will be added in next several months, giving U.S. over 400 navy fighters and bombers alone in the region.

TANKS: Currently over 500 tanks in Saudi Arabia and some 1,000 modern M-1A1 tanks, most of them in Germany, will be added in next three months. U.S. forces in the region include over 60,000 marines — most of them in Saudi Arabia — and 50,000 sailors and navy men on over 60 warships in the Gulf, northern Arabian Sea, Red Sea and Mediterranean.

The Pentagon has called more than 120,000 part-time reserve and National Guard troops to active duty since the crisis began. Defence Secretary Dick Cheney has authorised a call-up of up to 188,000 if necessary.

NAVY SHIPS AND PLANES: Battleship Wisconsin in Gulf, aircraft carrier Midway in north.

AIR POWER: In addition to naval air power, over 300 air force fighters, bombers and other warplanes in area and defence officials say another 300 to be sent, massing over 1,000 planes against Iraq. They range from F-117A Stealth fighters to A-10 tank-killing attack craft.

There are more than 250 U.S. helicopters in Saudi Arabia, including AH-64 Apache tank-killers.

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Past, present and future of E. European sport

LONDON (R) — On a clear September night under a full Adriatic moon, the past, present and future of East European sport froze into an unforgettable tableau.

Before an emotional audience at the European Championships in Split, Yugoslavia, the East German squad departed an international athletics arena for the last time as a separate nation.

They left enduring memories of sporting excellence over the past 30 years during which a state of 16 million people rivalled the United States and the Soviet Union as one of the world's great sporting nations.

In their final athletics championships, the East Germans' continued superiority was reflected by a haul of 12 gold medals, the most by any nation.

And in Katrin Krabbe, poised and photogenic, they showed the way ahead for the fortunate few in Eastern Europe with a sprinter who is guaranteed a lucrative future on the international athletics circuit.

In a year of dizzy political change, Germany's unification dominated the East European sporting scene.

East Germany had manufac-

tured the world's most formidable sporting organisation in a propaganda exercise designed to demonstrate the superiority of the Communist system.

But with the downfall of the old regime, this organisation has disintegrated with trainers and administrators thrown out of their thousands.

"Like much of the whole country, sport is in crisis," Olympic shot champion Ulf Timmerman said. "The system that helped us develop talent is in danger."

Heike Drechsler, the European women's long jump champion, second to Krabbe over 200 metres in Split, agreed.

"We have already established ourselves. For the younger ones it will be much more difficult," she said.

Drechsler, a member of the old East German parliament, was one of a number of sports people who attracted various degrees of opprobrium for their association with a widely-hated government.

Figure skater Katerina Witt was roundly booed when she appeared on stage at a rock concert and her country home was twice burgled this year.

As the old sporting dynasties

followed political structures into oblivion, East Europeans were for the first time allowed to keep all their prize money.

In athletics, veteran Romanian Doina Melinte was first out of the blocks, winning \$100,000 for breaking the world indoor 1,500 metres record.

Melinte, the 1948 Olympic 800 metres champion, chased dollars throughout the northern summer on the Grand Prix circuit.

By the time she arrived in Split, she had left her best form far behind her but she was also undoubtedly richer than at any stage of her long career.

The World Cup provided the perfect showcase for East European soccer talent and the wealthy European clubs were quick to exploit a rich pool.

Czechoslovakia's national captain Ivan Hasek signed for French club St Etienne and striker Tomas Skuhrov went to Italy's Genoa.

Inevitably, tough, the Czechoslovak league was impoverished and no club team got beyond the second round of any European club competition in the autumn.

Romanian footballers were left in droves with almost the entire national team signed up by fore-

ign clubs.

Around 40 players flocked to clubs in Italy, Spain, Netherlands, Germany, Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria. They were followed by the leading exponents in handball and volleyball.

But although some lucky individuals prospered, including Yugoslav tennis players Monica Seles and Goran Ivanisevic who are already dollar millionaires, sport as a whole in Eastern Europe suffered during the year.

As backward state-controlled economies stumbled into the harsh light of the market economy, sports administrators face a bleak future without the subsidies used to pamper the elite and cater for the masses.

Hungary's new minister of sport, former swimmer, sports administrator and journalist Rezso Gallov, admits he faces a Herculean task to make the country's sporting organisations self-financing.

"Going over to a market economy means progress in every field with one exception — sport," Gallov said.

The total state subsidy for sport was 1.3 billion forint (\$21.3 million) annually. We have to find a new financial

structure to replace that."

Gallov has proposed sponsorships, a levy on soccer pool proceeds and two per cent tax on social security payments.

Romania, traditionally strong in gymnastics, boxing, canoeing and weightlifting, saw standards decline as state patronage diminished.

Reform has been muddled with clubs finding themselves caught in limbo between the old and the new. The only first division soccer club to succeed in self-financing is Universitatea Craiova, whose players recently staged protests and threatened a strike to win financial independence from the university which owns them.

Poland appeared to fare better than most, despite the endemic economic crisis and the withdrawal of subsidies which bankrupted many small sports organisations.

The first division soccer league remained intact and Legia Warsaw striker Roman Kosecki was targeted by several clubs, including England's Aston Villa.

By contrast, sport in the Soviet Union accurately mirrored the disarray and confusion

of a society convulsed by political changes and plummeting living standards.

The same tensions which threatened the Soviet Union with political disintegration took their toll on the soccer pitches and basketball courts with teams from Lithuania and Georgia opting out of nation-wide competitions.

Leonid Drachevsky, first deputy chairman of the state sports committee expressed the once unthinkable in an interview last October.

Drachevsky, asked about the prospects of future showdowns between athletes from the Soviet Union, United States and united Germany admitted: "If there is anyone to drop out it could only be us if we are deprived of public, state and legal support."

As the year ended, allegations of widespread drug taking were voiced in the German press.

One publication claimed 280

athletes and teams in the former East Germany had used performance-enhancing drugs and named 140 track and field athletes who had won Olympic or World Championship medals, claiming they had all used banned substances.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY DECEMBER 23, 1990

By Thomas S. Pieron, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

If you show one with whom you have assisted for a long time and need his help.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Have a good time with those long-time partners who have brought you joy and the things that mean the most to you and you will find results.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Think over what you want your own kind to do and let them know you will do at least your fair share of the project involved and be happy.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) There are a number of close contacts in your daily life who want the right answers so go with them to studies, services that achieve this.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A day to think in terms of a greater abundance that you can build up with steady work then tonight steer clear of demanding friends.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Your mind is brilliant now and if you carry through with a subject that can be very helpful to you make sure that you do open up facts.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is your day to make sure you reflect, meditate and concentrate upon fine ideas you have not known before this, then avoid a temptation.

Karpov calls timeout

LYON, France (AP) — Anatoly Karpov called a timeout for the 22nd game Saturday in the World Chess Championship with Garry Kasparov, postponing the game until Monday.

Kasparov, the reigning champion, is on the verge of retaining his title. He leads 11-5-9.5 and needs only a draw to clinch a 12-12 tie.

There are no more timeouts left by either player. In case of an adjournment the regulations state they must continue playing the following day.

However, both of the players could agree to ask for a technical timeout for the Christmas Eve game. If the International Chess Federation grants it, the 22nd game would start Wednesday.

Kasparov has won the last

Syrians cause sensation at Dubai Karate Championship

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Syria upset the team favourite, Japan, Friday to win the gold medal in the 1990 World Karate Championship.

And Morocco's Malika Sayed caused another upset when she won the women's individual Kumite gold medal by beating Australia's Kim Marriott in the final of the 12 games played at New York between Oct. 8 and Nov. 7.

Even if Kasparov clinches a tie in the series, the two Soviet grandmasters will continue playing to see who wins the majority of the \$3-million purse. Otherwise it will be split.

Kasparov won the title from Karpov in 1985 and has defended it in 1986 and 1987. Karpov took the championship in 1975 when American Bobby Fischer refused to defend the title he won in 1972.

medals in the championship sponsored by Dubai Duty Free and adjudicated by the Japan Karate Association.

Some 400 contestants from 37 countries started off in the contest.

No one expected Syria to reach the finals, and few gave them a chance against a Japanese team including Masao Kagawa, the world champion.

He failed to find his usual killing blow in the final bout and Syria won in tremendous style.

Later Kagawa beat his colleague Mobjuki Arimoto for

the gold medal to retain his title in the individual Kumite. The judges could not separate Korea's Young Jung Koh and Pemba Temang of Nepal and both were given a bronze medal.

Kagawa won another gold in the individual Kata Competition.

Iran's Mohammad Nader-Berge won the silver and Asano, silver, and Kazumi Kamiya the bronze.

The medals were presented by the United Arab Emirates Minister of Defence, Sheikh Mohammad Ibn Rashi Al Maktoom.

Italy beats Cyprus, 4-0

LIMASSOL (AP) — Italy coasted to an easy 4-0 victory over Cyprus here Saturday in a qualifying game for Group Three of the European Soccer Championship.

After scoring three goals in the first half, the Italian team took it easy playing as if they were in a practice game rather than an important international match.

The game was so one-sided that a Cypriot radio commentator apologised to listeners during live coverage saying: "I am terribly sorry but every time the Italians approach our goal we fear they will score again."

Cyprus managed to make a couple of forays against the Ita-

U.S. shot put record holder to tell his story

WASHINGTON (AP) — Shot put world record holder Randy Barnes claims that the drug test that halted his rise in the sports world was mishandled at all steps by Swedish authorities. He is asking the Athletics Congress, the governing body for American track and field (TAC), to allow him to compete

in the United States and help clear the way for his return to the international ring.

"It's six years of competition I have never taken any prohibited substance," Barnes said in an affidavit to TAC. "I have been subjected to dope tests on approximately 30 occasions since 1985 and have always tested negatively."

A silver medallist at the 1988 Olympics, Barnes has some \$200,000 in annual income riding on his ability to put the shot and is trying to wipe the suspension away before the 1991 World Championships and the 1992 Olympics.

A three-member TAC panel will hear Barnes' appeal. If they recommend his suspension be lifted, Barnes could compete in American meets while awaiting appeal of his suspension by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF).

Barnes, 21, was suspended by the IAAF this fall after author-

ities said he tested positive for use of methyltestosterone at a meet in Malmö, Sweden, an event he won with a put of 71 feet, 11 1/2 inches (23.73 metres). He set the world record of 75-10 1/2 (23.01 metres) in May in Los Angeles.

Leading Barnes' appeal is Washington lawyer John Dowd, who defended Pete Rose in his tax evasion case.

Hearing Barnes' appeal will be Cliff Wiley, vice president of TAC, Tim Baker and Jill Pilgrim. A Congress official said they have two days to issue a statement on the hearing, and that could be anything from a request for more information to a final recommendation.

Barnes says there is no way of telling whose samples were examined before he was thrown out of international meets.

"Numerous departures" from testing guidelines "demonstrate the total unreliability of the test results," his appeal to TAC said.

Revenge, money and luck to decide yacht race winner

SYDNEY (R) — Revenge, money and sheer luck will determine the winner of the 1990 Sydney-to-Hobart yacht race.

But their short-lived superiority vanished as the Italians overcame an initial hesitation to impose complete mastery, scoring their first goal, a header by Pietro Vierchowod at the 15th minute.

British Maxi Rothmans starts favourite in the 630 nautical miles race beginning Wednesday.

The 24-metre high-tech yacht, fourth in the 1989-90 Whitbread Round the World Race, epitomises professional ocean racing with its unlimited budget and

competition-hardened crew.

"Of course we are looking for honours in the big race — and the record," said skipper and Olympic yachtsman Lawrence Smith. "It may unlikely, but I am sure it's possible."

American Maxi Kialoa set the race best of two days 14 hours 36 minutes 56 seconds in 1975.

"We will certainly be a much faster boat than Kialoa was in those days, it just depends on if you get the right weather," said Smith.

Aldo Serena scored the second goal at the 22nd minute, as well as the fourth, just three minutes into the second half.

Kronberger, who had won four of the first six races this season including the first Slalom, nearly fell at the start of the first run and missed a gate.

After the first run I felt good and thought I could win it," Fernandez-Ochoa said. "I didn't

Mutt 'n' Jeff



GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AQJ1096 ♠AJ3 ♣K93
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♣ Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦K6 ♠K8 ♠Q753 ♣A
Partner opens the bidding with one diamond. What do you respond?

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦A962 ♠J82 ♠Q753 ♣A
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♣ Pass

What do you bid now?

Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♦AJ654 ♠77 ♠J65 ♣K93
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♣ Pass

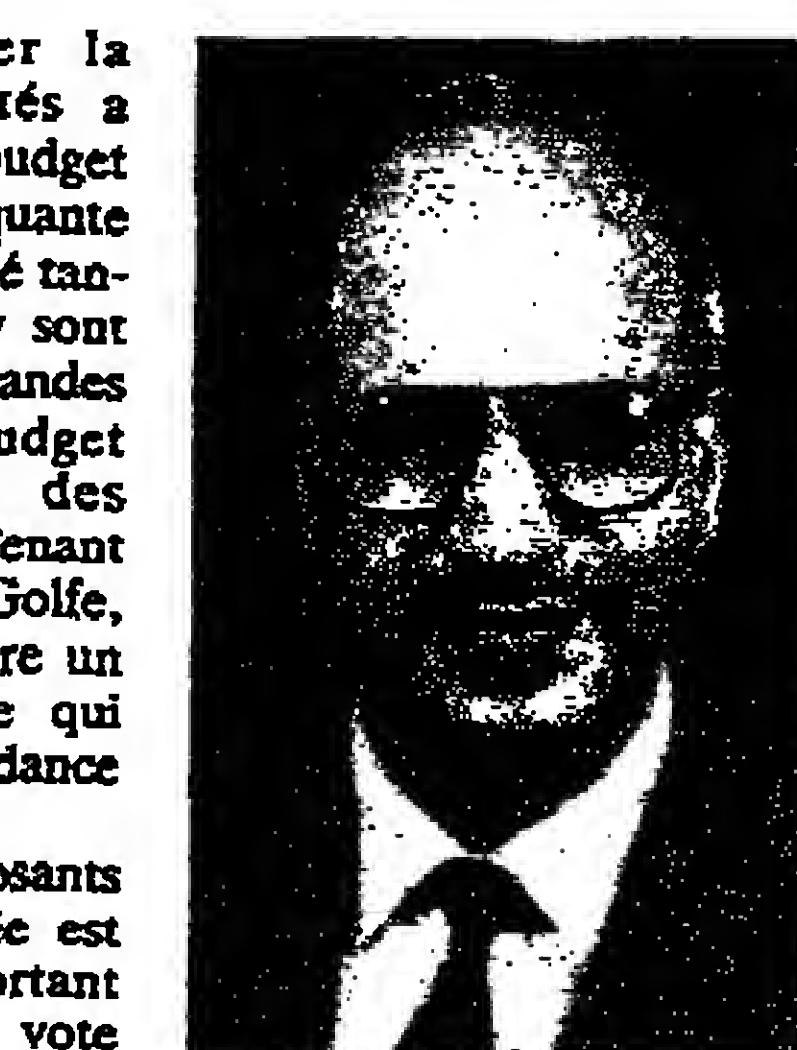
What action do you take?



LA SEMAINE...

de Suleiman Swiss

Budget 1991: l'austérité



Mercredi dernier la chambre des députés a adopté le projet de budget 1991 de l'Etat. Cinquante députés l'ont approuvé tandis que 25 autres s'y sont opposés. Dans ses grandes lignes, c'est un budget semblable à ceux des années précédentes. Tenant compte de la crise du Golfe, le budget réduit encore un peu les dépenses, ce qui marque une nette tendance vers l'austérité.

Le nombre d'opposants au budget cette année est beaucoup plus important que l'an dernier. Ce vote traduit une déception face à la performance gouvernementale depuis un an? Peut-on le considérer comme un signe avant courre d'une volonté de changer l'équipe ministérielle, ou tout simplement la remanier pour permettre aux Frères Musulmans et à leurs alliés de siéger au gouvernement?

En l'absence de réponses à ces questions, revenons au budget et aux débats parlementaire de la semaine dernière. La liste traditionnelle de nos problèmes a été lue et relue sans que de véritables solutions ou même de simples propositions concrètes ne soient avancées: stagnation économique, baisse des revenus, augmentation du taux de chômage et du déficit de la balance commerciale, inflation, problèmes de l'agriculture et de l'industrie, etc. Avec les retombées de la crise du Golfe, nous avons perdu les marchés de l'Irak, du Koweït et d'autres pays du Golfe. Le problème des dettes extérieures s'est aggravé et certains députés sont allés jusqu'à réclamer l'annulation pure et simple de ces dettes (8,5 milliards de dollars), puisque —quoi qu'en fasse— le gouvernement ne sera pas en mesure de les rembourser après la fermeture du robinet des subventions et prêts en provenance des pays du Golfe.

Pour justifier la détérioration de la situation économique, le gouvernement évoque les répercussions de la crise du Golfe sur notre pays. Ses effets négatifs sont certes indéniables, mais il vaudrait mieux parler des «égoïsme à tirer de la crise du Golfe que de considérer cette crise comme une excuse ou un prétexte à la détérioration.

La crise économique a révélé au grand jour notre dépendance extérieure. La première leçon à tirer consiste donc à chercher les moyens par lesquels nous pouvons compter sur nous-mêmes et développer notre capacité de production. Alléger les normes de salubrité à la campagne (dans des limites raisonnables) pour permettre aux ruraux d'élever des animaux serait un pas vers la réduction de nos importations de viande et d'autres produits alimentaires. C'est un exemple parmi tant d'autres.

Réformer notre administration est un autre moyen de réaliser des économies conséquentes. Un nombre important de députés a cité —à titre d'exemple— le cas de la banque Pétra. La Banque Centrale a versé 250 millions de dinars pour indemniser les pertes de «Pétra», dues à la corruption et à la mauvaise gestion.

Nous avons encore le sentiment que l'élaboration de la politique économique du pays est l'affaire de quelques responsables. Le budget par lui-même ne peut pas remplacer l'effort collectif nécessaire pour définir une politique globale qui aide notre pays à sortir de la crise.

Plusieurs députés et forces politiques ont réclamé la tenue d'une «conférence économique» au niveau national pour étudier l'ensemble des problèmes et y trouver les solutions adéquates. Le pouvoir exécutif semble ignorer cette revendication sans donner d'explications. Pourtant, cette idée a reçu un écho favorable dans certaines hautes sphères dirigeantes.

Il est grand temps de regarder la réalité en face. Nous devons travailler sérieusement pour construire une économie dont le développement dépend essentiellement de facteurs intérieurs. De même, nous devons réapprendre à vivre selon nos moyens. Au vu des réactions populaires de ces derniers mois face aux mesures d'austérité, on est en droit d'estimer que le peuple est prêt à faire des sacrifices. Il serait souhaitable que les responsables en profitent pour guérir le pays de ses maladies chroniques.

EN BREF

Egypte: Après sept semaines d'intenses tractations, le Conseil de Sécurité a adopté jeudi une déclaration présidentielle, non contraignante, qui évoque pour la première fois la tenue d'une conférence internationale de paix sur le Moyen-Orient. Les membres du Conseil considèrent que sa convocation «au moment approprié», devrait faciliter les efforts visant à parvenir à un règlement négocié du conflit arabo-israélien. Simultanément, le Conseil de Sécurité a adopté à l'unanimité la résolution 681 qui «déplore» la décision prise par Israël de procéder de nouveau à l'expulsion de civils palestiniens des territoires occupés.

Mitterrand: Le président français François Mitterrand, estimant qu'il «est encore possible» de parvenir à une solution pacifique pour sortir de la crise du Golfe, a dressé jeudi les grandes lignes d'un scénario axé sur l'évacuation totale du Koweït par l'Irak mais assorti de garanties pour Bagdad et l'ensemble de la région. Ces garanties consisteraient notamment à assurer Bagdad qu'il n'est pas question de conquérir l'Irak ou de détruire sa puissance militaire, «objectifs de la foi des Chrétiens, mais

Liban. Le président Hélias Hraoui a chargé jeudi soir M. Omar Karamé de former un gouvernement d'unité nationale, qui doit regrouper les protagonistes de la guerre du Liban. La désignation attendue de M. Karamé, avocat sunnite de 55 ans et frère du Premier ministre assassiné en 1987 Rachid Karamé, a conclu une journée-marathon de consultations entre le président Hraoui et 45 des 67 députés en fonction. L'ancien Premier ministre Salim Hoss avait présenté mercredi la démission de son gouvernement, artisan durant trois mois d'un début de normalisation dans le pays.

Chevervadze: Le ministre soviétique des Affaires Etrangères, Edouard Chevervadze a présenté jeudi sa démission de gouvernement devant le Congrès des députés, pour protester contre «la dictature qui approche», non sans avoir remercié son «ami» Mikhaïl Gorbatchev. Ce dernier a pour sa part déclaré que cette démission était «une surprise complète» tout en la condamnant. «Il ne faut pas tomber dans la panique et surtout pas dans l'hystérie» a-t-il dit.

Ministre: Michel Delébarre, ancien ministre français de l'Équipement, a été nommé mercredi ministre d'Etat chargé de la ville. La création de ce ministère avait été annoncée par le président François Mitterrand il y a quelques semaines, après les crises qui avaient secoué plusieurs banlieues des grandes villes du pays. M. Delébarre est remplacé dans ses précédentes fonctions par Louis Besson. Ce dernier n'est pas remplacé à son ancien poste de ministre délégué à l'Équipement.

Interview de Mgr Raouf

Noël en Jordanie

C'était il y a 1990 ans, à 75 kilomètres à l'ouest d'Amman... Dans la nuit du 24 au 25 décembre, Jésus naissait à Bethléem (aujourd'hui en Palestine occupée) et, avec lui, naissait la religion chrétienne. Les Chrétiens (catholiques, protestants, orthodoxes) sont une petite minorité en Jordanie; ils ne représentent pas plus de 5% de la population. Mais la fête de Noël qui commémore cette double naissance est devenue une fête mondiale, presque autant civile que spirituelle, et il est fréquent que des Musulmans saisissent cette occasion de festoyer et d'échanger des cadeaux. Pour évoquer Noël, «Le Jourdain» a rencontré Mgr Raouf, représentant du délégué apostolique de Jérusalem en Jordanie depuis 1977.

Le Jourdain: Noël en Jordanie prend-il une forme particulière du fait de la proximité de Bethléem et du caractère minoritaire de la communauté chrétienne?

Mgr Raouf: Malgré son caractère minoritaire, la communauté chrétienne de Jordanie est considérée comme faisant partie intégrante de la société jordanienne, au même degré que sa sœur musulmane. Noël est donc célébré en toute solennité, spirituelle et civile, par les Chrétiens des différents rites (Catholiques, Orthodoxes, Protestants) à la même date. On installe des crèches dans les églises, et des arbres illuminés prennent place dans les églises et les vérandas des maisons, y compris chez bon nombre de familles musulmanes. En ce qui me concerne, je prononce une messe solennelle à 10h30 en l'église Notre-Dame de l'Annonciation à Jebel Webdeh et je reçois les gens pour la fête. La journée se termine par la messe de minuit que je prononce au même endroit.

LJ: Un des personnages importants ce jour-là—pour les enfants notamment— c'est le Père Noël.

Mgr R: Certainement. Et ici il a le mérite d'exister, grâce aux associations de bienfaisance et aux scouts. De nombreux parents téléphonent à ces organisations pour leur signaler qu'ils ont des enfants qui attendent le Père Noël. Le jour venu, celui-ci parcourt les rues sur un char décoré en faisant tinter des clochettes pour distribuer des cadeaux dans chaque maison.

LJ: Originaire de Nazareth, où vivaient les parents de Jésus, et président de l'Université de Bethléem où il est né, pouvez-vous nous dire comment se déroule la cérémonie de Noël dans ces lieux sacrés?

Mgr R: J'ai vécu un Noël à Bethléem il y a trente ans. La cérémonie est différente car il y a des traditions que la ville doit respecter. Le patriarche latin de Jérusalem quitte Jérusalem à 13h. Il est reçu à

la porte de Bethléem par le maire, le gouverneur et les notables de la ville. Sa voûte, dévancée par des chevaux, arrive jusqu'à la grotte où est né Jésus, attendue par le peuple et les officiels. On commence alors à chanter les hymnes religieux avant de rentrer dans la grotte où sont prononcées les vêpres. Et la cérémonie recommence pour la messe pontificale de minuit. Aujourd'hui, ces cérémonies sont un peu plus difficiles à organiser compte tenu de la situation politique qui règne là-bas, mais elles ont toujours lieu, avec un peu moins de solennité c'est vrai.

LJ: Mgr Raouf.

LJ: On dit que l'an dernier la Sainte Vierge, mère de Jésus, a fait une apparition à Jebel Webdeh. Qu'en est-il au juste?

Mgr R: Ce qui est sûr, c'est qu'une dame qui vit toujours ici, à Jebel Webdeh, a affirmé, un jour d'octobre 1989, avoir vu la Vierge dans sa maison. L'église a noté le fait comme elle enregistre toutes les observations de ce genre, mais elle n'a pas rencontré à ce jour la validité de cette apparition.

LJ: A l'approche de la nouvelle année, quelles séquelles avez-vous à formuler?

Mgr R: Je souhaite que la paix règne dans ce pays où la paix a été donnée au monde entier. Si l'on parvient à faire cette paix le monde entier vivra dans le calme, et dans l'aisance.

aujourd'hui ces choses sont oubliées et je ne pense pas qu'il faille s'attendre au moindre attroupement autour de cette maison le jour de Noël.

LJ: La communauté chrétienne de Jordanie est-elle très dispersée ou se localise-t-elle dans certaines cités bien déterminées où elle est majoritaire? Je pense notamment à Madaba.

Mgr R: Madaba, c'est vrai, a été une ville chrétienne dans le passé mais ce n'est plus du tout le cas aujourd'hui. La communauté est même devenue minoritaire et le maire de la ville comme le conseil municipal y sont musulmans, à l'exception de deux conseillers. Il ne reste en fait que trois villages dont on peut dire qu'ils sont absolument chrétiens, c'est Smakheh au nord de Kerak, Fuheis à l'ouest d'Amman, et Shatana au sud d'Irbid. Ces villages sont le lieu de sédantation de tribus chrétiennes qui les peuplent quasi-exclusivement. Partout ailleurs, les communautés sont toutes mélangées et vivent généralement en bonne harmonie.

LJ: En quoi consiste exactement votre rôle en Jordanie?

Mgr R: Nous fonctionnons comme une ambassade. Nous transmettons au Vatican les informations politiques et religieuses dont nous disposons sur la région, et nous relayons ses messages. Tout cela en liaison permanente avec le délégué apostolique de Jérusalem. En ce moment, par exemple, nous travaillons à l'organisation d'un voyage pour une délégation populaire jordanienne de Chrétiens et de Musulmans qui désirent rencontrer Sa Sainteté le Pape et qui doivent se rendre au Vatican du 5 au 10 janvier prochain. Pour la journée de Noël, aussi, on m'a demandé de participer à la veillée pour la paix que les femmes étrangères en Jordanie organisent à Amman. (Voir encadré.)

LJ: A quand remonte le dernier voyage du Pape dans la région?

Mgr R: A 1964. C'est un peu paradoxal, j'en conviens, que le pape actuel, qui a fait plusieurs fois le tour du monde, ne se soit pas encore rendu en Terre Sainte. Mais compte-tenu de la situation politique tendue qui règne depuis longtemps dans la région, il a semblé qu'une telle visite créerait plus de troubles qu'elle n'apporterait de sérénité.

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Propos recueillis par Jean-Marc Bordes

A L'AFFICHE

FOCUS

L'état d'une année

A la fin de chaque année, Kathy Kakish, productrice du Jordan Weekly, semi-hebdomadaire de Radio Jordan traitant de sujets socio-économiques, prépare une édition spéciale de son magazine. Pendant une heure, ce numéro annuel, surnommé le Jordan Yearly propose (le vendredi 24 à 14h00 et le samedi 25 à 12h05, cette année) un recueil des entretiens que la productrice estime avoir été les plus révélateurs des vicissitudes de la société jordanienne.

Le Jourdain: Y a-t-il une différence marquée entre le Jordan Weekly et le Yearly?

Kathy Kakish: Le Yearly se veut un résumé —à travers des perceptions multiples— des événements qui ont profondément touché le pays pendant l'année. Si dans l'édition 1990, le crise du Golfe occupe une place prépondérante, c'est qu'elle a joué le rôle central dans notre vie économique et sociale. Le Yearly se veut aussi un aïde-mémoire. Cette année surtout, il est nécessaire d'évoquer les différents événements qui ont intéressé les Jordaniens avant que la crise n'éclate et ne les éclipsé. Il faut rappeler par exemple que des athlètes qui ont participé en Ecosse du sud aux Jeux internationaux d'athlétisme pour handicapés ont rapporté à la Jordanie six médailles d'or et huit d'argent. Sans cette secousse de mémoire, un tel succès serait perdu.

LJ: A quelles autres sujets fait-il s'attendre?

KK: A la science, entre autres. Sous la rubrique V.I.P. (Very Interesting Person), ma collègue Lina Muasher s'entretiendra avec le professeur Edward Whaler, l'homme de la NASA qui a lancé le télescope spatial Hubble. Il parlera de l'empire de trouver de nouveaux lieux d'habitation en dehors de notre planète pour que la race humaine puisse ultérieurement survivre.

LJ: Mesures de guerre. Fin de l'humanité. N'est-ce pas que le ton de cette édition est un peu apocalyptique?

KK: Le Jordan Weekly tout comme le Yearly ne représentent que ce qui est en train de se passer. Quand j'ai commencé en 1984, les événements à illustrer étaient pour la plupart culturels. En fait, au début des années 1980 —une période de prospérité— les Jordaniens se rendaient beaucoup aux concerts et au théâtre. Depuis 1987, et depuis le début de nos ennuis financiers, le magazine s'est tourné vers les thèmes économiques. L'ensemble est dicté par les préoccupations du pays, aujourd'hui la politique. Trouvez-moi le Jordaniens qui a réussi à échapper aux répercussions de la crise du Golfe. Qu'en le veuille ou non, elle nous imprègne tous jusqu'à la moelle.

LJ: Quelle est la différence entre son émission et un journal d'actualités?

KK: Notre travail —le mien et celui de mon équipe, Nur Saty et Lina Muasher— est de chercher dans les cadres sociaux et économiques du pays les éléments importants, au-delà des titres de journal. Un jour, par exemple, dans une conférence de médecins, j'ai découvert qu'un docteur jordanien (Zeid Kilani) se livrait à des expériences de bébés-épreuves. Ce fait n'avait été mentionné nulle part dans la presse, ni même dans les communiqués du département des relations publiques.

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LJ: Quel est son genre d'interview préféré? Studio, terrain ou téléphone?

KK: Rien ne remplace l'entretien sur le terrain. Mon hôte se trouve dans l'environnement qui lui est propre. Plus à l'aise, il répond avec beaucoup plus de souplesse. Et de mon point de vue, ce cadre m'inspire toujours des questions auxquelles je n'avais pas pensé. Mais entre l'entretien téléphonique et celui en studio, je préfère mille fois ce dernier. Même si le cadre technique est un peu inhabituel, il me reste l'autot d'être face à face avec mon interlocuteur. Le contact par téléphone ne marche bien que dans le cas où l'on se connaît déjà depuis longtemps.

LJ: De quelles interviews garde-t-elle le meilleur souvenir?

KK: Cela ne m'arrive pas souvent, mais parfois je me trouve face d'une personne qui représente pour moi un défi intellectuel par la malice qu'elle a de son sujet (arts, sciences, économie, n'importe) et par son eloquence. Je me sens alors contrainte d'aller de pair avec cette personne, de prendre les devants si j'y parviens, pour trouver des questions qui peuvent stimuler cette intelligence. Ces expériences m'enthousiasment beaucoup et je souhaite qu'elles se renouvellent.

Propos recueillis par Sami Kamal

TELEVISION

DIMANCHE

17h30 - «J'ai rencontré le père Noël». Film de Noël pour les enfants.

19h00 - Le Journal.

19h15 - Concert de notes. Extraits de musique classique.

LUNDI

18h00 - L'oiseau des mers. Dessin animé.

18h10 - Denver, le dernier dinosaure. Dessin animé.

18h35 - Aventure Voyage. Magazine de l'aventure.

19h00 - Le Journal.

19h15 - Magazine sportif hebdomadaire.

Repas de noël et du réveillon

La grande saga du foie gras

Rares sont les Français qui conçoivent un repas de Noël ou du jour de l'An qui ne commencerait pas par des toasts de foie gras. La France est le premier producteur et le premier exportateur de ce produit étrange, unique en son genre. Il doit sa couleur subtile (mélange de gris, de beige et de rosé), sa texture unique (à mi-chemin entre le beurre et le pâté) et son goût indescriptible, à une nourriture forcée et disproportionnée de l'oie ou du canard, qui provoque une hypertrophie et un changement de structure de son foie. Loin d'être une invention française et récente, il semble que l'idée du gavage des oies soit née il y a environ 4.500 ans... en Egypte.

Oies et canards ne sont certainement encore que des oiseaux sauvages, un gibier abondant et appréciable, quand l'Homme les dessine tout au long de la grotte de Labastide, dans le canton de la Barthe-de-Neste, quelques millénaires avant que notre histoire commence. L'homme préhistorique subit les lois d'une nature violente, dont il ne sait pas se protéger. Mais il observe et apprend, et le temps vient où il devine à quel moment, dans le rythme des saisons, il faut attraper les oies et les canards. Quand les jours décroissent, les oiseaux, eux, d'instinct, se garent, s'empiffrer de tout ce qu'ils trouvent de consistant: grains farineux, fruits à maturité, poisons gras, aliments qui seront stockés dans leur corps. Ces réserves les aident à rejoindre les régions aux hivers plus cléments.

Dans la tribu de celui qui sculpta ces pièces d'os et de bois exposées au musée de l'Oie, à Thiviers en Périgord, ignorent encore que ces oiseaux migrateurs s'engraissent d'eux-mêmes en prévision de leurs longs voyages? Des millénaires s'écouleront de la chasse à la capture, de la capture à l'élevage et à l'engraissement provoqué.

Plus tard, sur les bords du Nil, l'oie est même hussée au rang des animaux sacrés. On la vénère: Pharaon est le soleil, son âme est une oie, car «l'oie est le soleil sorti de l'œuf primordial», l'intermédiaire entre la terre et le ciel, entre la vie ici-bas et la vie éternelle. Mais l'Egypte des pharaons n'a pas que des préoccupations métaphysiques. Oies et canards sont élevés d'abord pour garnir les tables des banquets. On les voit, plumes, la tête pendante, le bec vers le bas, déposés sur des montagnes de nourritures les plus variées.

La découverte la plus sensationnelle pour nous fut celle de la Ve dynastie (environ 2.500 ans av. J.-C.) à Saqqarah. Ici, on compte les oies qui avancent en troupeaux serrés. Des paniers d'osiers émergent sous et sous. Là une scène étrange attire notre attention: des serviteurs accroupis préparent une pâte, en font des boulettes qu'ils roulent entre leurs mains et qu'ils alignent sur des coupes élégantes et sophistiquées. Ces galettes sont-elles destinées à des invités? à des enfants royaux? Pas du tout. La bande dessinée antique qui orne les murs du tombeau continue. Et qui voyons nous venir, tendant le bec, soulevant leurs ailes pour s'éviter? Une myriade d'oies et de canards que les serviteurs prennent à tour de rôle par le cou et nourrissent un à un de ces galettes. Le jabot garni, nos volatiles vont se désaltérer dans des coupes dispensées ça et là. Ainsi est décrite la

première scène connue de gavage de palmipèdes. Peut-on imaginer qu'on ait engrangé des oies et des canards tout au long des dynasties pharaoniques sans avoir remarqué que le foie grossissait, sans avoir découvert ses immenses qualités gustatives, sans les avoir fait connaître aux plus riches, aux plus puissants, donc à la cour de Pharaon?

La technique du gavage va traverser les siècles, mais ce n'est pas l'écriture des Egyptiens, cachée et devenue illisible qui le permettra. Elle va prendre un autre chemin, et accompagner un long voyage.

Moïse ramène les Hébreux condamnés à l'esclavage. Parmi ces hommes marchent les canards pour des raisons pratiques alors que, les Romains n'engraissent que des oies, mais le résultat est le même quant aux questions que nous posons et que voici: le foie prend-il un volume important? Le foie de l'animal gavé aux figues arrive-t-il à cette teinte blonde que nous lui connaissons aujourd'hui avec le maïs? A la préparation identique, le goût du foie gras de canard gavé aux figues est-il le même que celui du foie gras de canard gavé au maïs?

Parmi ses cent cinquante canards à gaver, une fermière de Castelpugno, en Béarn, en parla deux qui ne mangeraient que des figues sèches, environ une dizaine de kilos au lieu de dix kilos de maïs cuits distribués à tous leurs congénères. Au bout de deux semaines, nos deux canards étaient à point, «jolis», comparables aux cent quarante huit conférés au maïs.

Leur foie mis en conserve fut servi au milieu d'autres foies de canard, sans mention qui puisse distinguer une particularité de gavage ni d'origine, à une quinzaine de dégustateurs.

Leur foie mis en conserve fut servi au milieu d'autres foies de canard, sans mention qui puisse distinguer une particularité de gavage ni d'origine. Enfin, la viande ne peut être frite ou conservée que dans l'huile ou la graisse de certains animaux ne produisant pas de lait: l'oie par exemple.

L'oie est connue des Grecs. La sculpture «L'enfant à l'oie» dont une réplique se trouve au musée du Louvre, est d'un artiste grec du IIIème siècle av. J.C.

Nous avons la certitude que les Grecs gavaient les oies...

Epigène, auteur comique, croit qu'on le prend pour le «tourne comme une oie qu'on engrasse». La Fontaine, plus tard, imitera Esopon. Mais celui-ci n'a jamais écrit l'histoire d'une poule aux œufs d'or. Il s'agissait d'une oie aux œufs d'or.

Les Romains apprirent tout des peuples qu'ils vainquirent, dit-on. L'art de se nourrir suit l'histoire de l'Empire, et s'enrichit de ses conquêtes.

Le délice des cuisiniers romains n'a pas de limite. Il n'est

pas étonnant qu'ils soient allés emprunter aux Grecs la recette du foie gras. Hubert Monteillet, dans «Nécropole» raconte:

«On obtenait des foies énormes et tendres en gavant les volatiles avec une pâte à base de figues. Les foies étaient finalement mis à mariner et à gonfler dans du lait additionné de miel.

Le foie gras ainsi traité était vite devenu le symbole du luxe culinaire. Alors que le foie se disait normalement «écuré en latin, l'habitude se prenait déjà d'appeler «écuré comme la ville d'Oloron (Béarn), qui se rendit au concile d'Agde en 506. Sur

nommé «Père des pauvres», son nom est attaché à celui du «gut», du canard. Pourquoi? Oloron est la déformation du mot ibère «Iluro», ou «cité des eaux». Les canards séjournent dans les marécages qui entourent la ville. Encourageant leur élevage pour les distribuer aux plus démunis?

A Mirela, le portail roman de l'ancienne cathédrale Sainte-Foy présente les vieillards de l'Apocalypse, les scènes de la vie quotidienne, et... une kyrielle d'oies qui furent restaurées au XIXème siècle. Le canard ne devient pas un animal sacré comme l'œuf des Egyptiens et celle des Romains, mais il mérite, avec le poisson, de figurer chez nous sur les édifices du culte. Influence romaine qui n'a pas dégénéré, apporté des coutumes juives, besoin constant de restaurer la provision, gourmandise des préfets... et des autres, tout concourt à nous persuader que, dès l'abord de notre ère, et durant tout le Moyen-Age, on engrangeait au moins et guisait dans le grand Sud-Ouest de la France.

Toutefois, l'empreinte de la patte palmée n'indique pas seulement le passage des oiseaux d'eau. Victime de l'irrationnel, l'homme interprète les signes afin de ne pas trop souffrir du combat que se livrent les forces du bien et celles du mal. Il faut attirer les més, détournir les autres. Tantôt lui prête des pouvoirs surnaturels, on le craint, on cherche à lui plaire. Tantôt on voit en lui le responsable des malheurs et des maladies, et ce fils du diable est en danger d'être brûlé. Il vaut donc mieux cacher ses pieds palmés.

Les tourments de la jolie reine aux pieds palmés

Ainsi aurait existé une belle fille qui ne voulait jamais montrer ses pieds. Son mari, un jeune roi wisigoth très puissant, ne put déchausser la nuit de ses noces, ni les暮下 suivantes. Peu à peu, voyant que son époux respecterait son secret, la jeune reine prit confiance, et l'habitude de dormir pieds nus. Elle quittait ses chaussures dès que la bougie était éteinte. Avec le temps, la curiosité du roi ne s'émoignait pas. Un soir, il versa une mince couche de sable au fond du lit et attendit l'arrivée de la reine la veille. Le lendemain horrifié, il vit la trace des pieds palmés de sa jeune épouse! Il s'agissait de la reine Pédauque. «Pé d'aqué», qui signifie en langue d'oïc: pied d'oie.

Une reine wisigoth aux pieds d'oie! Avec elle commence la sombre histoire des cagots de Sud-Ouest. Qui étaient ces parias condamnés à vivre à l'écart des villages, à entrer dans les églises par une petite porte latérale? Ces «intouchables» étaient-ils des lépreux? Les descendants des personnes malades récemment converties au christianisme? Les descendants des Goths vaincus? Y aurait-il parmi eux, à cause des mariages consanguins auxquels ils étaient condamnés, plus d'enfants naissant les pieds palmés?

Toutes sortes d'hypothèses ont été avancées. Il paraît tout de même certain qu'ils étaient censés appliquer aux oies

Conception

Le foie gras est servi froid à l'aide d'un couteau dont la lame est préalablement trempée dans l'eau chaude.

La tiédeur du tranchant révèle légèrement le parfum capiteux endormi par le froid. Porté à la bouche, le foie fond sur la langue, dégagant la richesse de son goût.

Multiple et puissante, d'une générosité presque trop poussée, la saveur du foie gras emplit la bouche comme le chant d'un requiem emplirait une cathédrale. Il est à la fois douceur du Lacrimosa et majesté du Kyrie, mais sa rondeur et sa chaleur ont aussi la volonté voire l'indépendance du profane. Car le foie gras possède en lui, c'est d'ailleurs son essence même, tous les excès; à une époque où la faveur revient aux aliments diététiques et aux femmes maigres, le foie gras nous rappelle les plaisirs de la chair tels que les décrivaient Rabelais et l'offrande candide des Vénus calypso.

Il n'y a qu'un pas du gavage à la maladie puis à la mort comme il n'y a qu'un pas de l'odeur du foie gras à celle du faisané ou du porc-épic. Le foie gras se tient à cette limite du déficient et de l'immangeable, du sain et du malais. Le miracle est bien là: tout ajout aux subtiles nuances du foie gras le ferait tomber dans l'immobilité; en cela il est rocher de Syphax enfin immobilisé à son sommet, sommet de l'art culinaire.

Fabrication

Conserve de foie gras au naturel en terrine. Assaisonner le foie gras de sel épice; le faire macérer au cognac pendant quelques heures. L'éponger. Le cuire doucement, c'est à dire le faire pocher dans de la graisse d'oie clarifiée. Egoutter le foie, le couvrir de graisse d'oie. Faire bien refroidir. Coller sur le bord de cette terrine une bande de papier d'étain. Ainsi préparé et tenu dans un endroit frais et non humide, le foie peut se conserver fort longtemps.

Conserve de foie gras au naturel en boîte. Mettre dans des boîtes en fer blanc ovales des foies gras, choisis bien fermes, que l'on aura assaisonnés et fait masser pendant deux heures avec du cognac. Ajouter un peu de graisse d'oie dans les boîtes. Les souder. Faire cuire au bain-marie à ébullition non-interrompue pendant une heure et demie pour les boîtes d'un kilo, et une heure pour les boîtes de 500 grammes. Egoutter les boîtes. Les faire refroidir. Les bien essuyer et les conserver dans un lieu frais et sec.

Terrine de foie gras truffé à la façon périgourdine. Faire dégorger à l'eau froide pendant toute une nuit, un gros foie gras choisi bien ferme, l'éponger et l'éponger. Faire sur les lobes du foie quelques incisions et mettre sur chacune de ces fentes un morceau de truffe. Saler le foie et l'épicer. Le mettre dans une terrine, dont on aura garni le fond et les parois de tranches minces de lard gras frais. Appuyer sur le foie pour qu'il soit bien tassé dans le récipient. Le recouvrir d'une couche mince de viande de porc hachée, gras et maigre, et assaisonner congrument. Arroser de quelques cuillerées de bonne eau de vie et mettre sur le tout un peu de graisse d'oie fondue tiède. Fermer la terrine et en inter les bords avec une bande de pâte faite de farine et d'eau. Mettre la terrine dans une plaque à moitié pleine d'eau chaude. Cuire au four à bonne chaleur régulière pendant une heure environ. Faire bien refroidir sous presse légère. Lorsque le foie est bien refroidi, couler dessus quelques cuillerées de graisse d'oie et, lorsque cette graisse est bien figée, ajouter une peu de saindoux fondue. Couvrir la terrine; coller une bande de papier d'étain sur les bords. Conserver dans un endroit frais et non humide.

in Nouveau Larousse gastronomique, par Prosper Montagné, revu par Robert J. Courte.

porter cousue sous leur vêtement, l'empreinte infamante de la patte de canard aimé qu'on les reconnaît et qu'on les évite!

Un coup de pab qui venait d'Alsace

Oies et canards sont-ils donc devenus des oiseaux de malheur? Non, puisqu'en même temps naissent le jeu de l'oie et les légendes de Ma Mère l'Oye. Il est vrai que l'un a une interprétation ésotérique, et l'autre des origines douteuses: Ma Mère l'Oye serait une sorcière voyageant non pas sur un balai, mais sur le cou d'une oie! Mais laissez à l'abord de l'ésotérisme et revenez sur terre. Mais et foie gras sont aujourd'hui aussi étroitement associés que foie et figues. L'oie était chez les Romains. D'où vient donc cette cérémonie?

Christophe Colomb parle du maïs: «sorte de graine qui forme un épis commun à tous les oiseaux de l'Amérique du Sud». Il est vrai que l'un a une interprétation ésotérique, et l'autre des origines douteuses: Ma Mère l'Oye serait une sorcière voyageant non pas sur un balai, mais sur le cou d'une oie! Mais laissez à l'abord de l'ésotérisme et revenez sur terre. Mais et foie gras sont aussi étroitement associés que foie et figues. L'oie était chez les Romains. D'où vient donc cette cérémonie?

Entre 1770 et 1780, Jean-Pierre Clause, le cuisinier du gouverneur d'Alsace, le maréchal de Contades, réalise un plat qu'il s'empresse d'appeler «pâté à la Contades», en croûte et non truffé, à base de foie d'Alsace. Le maréchal de Contades est émerveillé et désire aussi faire connaître les plaisirs de ce pâté au roi Louis XIV. Reconnaissant, le roi lui octroie une terre en Picardie, et vingt-cinq pistoles au cuisinier. Ainsi, ce dernier s'établit à Strasbourg: voilà l'origine des foies gras d'Alsace.

Cette histoire se conta et se raconta, et les Alsaciens passèrent très vite pour ceux qui avaient redécouvert le foie gras.

Mais les Périgourdiens n'étaient pas d'accord. On trouve dans les archives du département l'expression de leur mécontentement, dès l'époque de la Révolution: «Périgueux. Les patissiers de cette ville ne sont pas content que l'on attribue l'invention des foies gras au seul génie gastronomique alsacien. Ils rétorquent que l'un de leurs plus fameux cuisiniers, Villemeynier de la Gâtine, a été le premier à servir un foie gras traditionnel, de ferme, convenablement apprêté qui se bonifie au fil du temps dans les caves à vin. D'où l'idée de ce foie gras à millésime. S'il est possible de suivre à peu près les traces des oiseaux gavés à travers le temps, ces traces semblent aujourd'hui se déperdre dans beaucoup de directions.

Qu'en est-il de cette production qui apparaît ici, là et ailleurs?

Cumonsky décrit ainsi le Périgord: «Un vrai Français puis-que l'âne à sa déigner lui-même.» C'est avec consternation que le Gascon qui ne vit pas luxueusement de l'élevage ou de la chasse à l'âne, mais à l'âne de la ferme, se demande: «Pourquoi pas?»

Entre 1770 et 1780, Jean-Pierre Clause, le cuisinier du gouverneur d'Alsace, le maréchal de Contades, réalise un plat qu'il s'empresse d'appeler «pâté à la Contades», en croûte et non truffé, à base de foie gras d'Alsace. Le maréchal de Contades est émerveillé et désire aussi faire connaître les plaisirs de ce pâté au roi Louis XIV. Reconnaissant, le roi lui octroie une terre en Picardie, et vingt-cinq pistoles au cuisinier. Ainsi, ce dernier s'établit à Strasbourg: voilà l'origine des foies gras d'Alsace.

Cette histoire se conta et se raconta, et les Alsaciens passèrent très vite pour ceux qui avaient redécouvert le foie gras.

Malin et astucieux, le foie gras est un plat qui a été inventé dans le Sud-Ouest, mais qui a été rapidement adopté dans le reste de la France. Il est donc possible de suivre à peu près les traces des oiseaux gavés à travers le temps, ces traces semblent aujourd'hui se déperdre dans beaucoup de directions.

Qu'en est-il de cette production qui apparaît ici, là et ailleurs?

Une petite mise au point s'impose donc...

Pour le moment, en matière de foie gras, la France garde la première place dans presque tous les domaines: premier pays producteur, avec environ quatre mille tonnes; premier pays consommateur; premier pays exportateur de foie gras transformé (conserves, pâtés).

Mais nous sommes aussi les premiers importateurs! La Hongrie nous a vendu mille cinq cents tonnes de foie gras en 1988 et commence à commercialiser des conserves.

Il ne faut pas être chauvin, mais il faut le dire: le meilleur foie gras est français...

Notre tradition et notre savoir-faire sont imbattables. Un Japonais échapperait de rire si on lui assurait, avec ce ton docte et sérieux des chargés d'études, que le foie gras est sans aucun doute la meilleure. Il a donc été choisi pour être la meilleure.

Le foie gras est français.

Le grand coup de publicité va

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1990



Pas de repas de Noël ou du jour de l'An sans des toasts de foie gras.

Conception

Un jour que les vaches de l'Olympe s'étaient égarées parce que les Dieux comme à l'accoutumée fôlotaient de leur côté, elles arrivèrent dans une région sans herbe, rocheuse, sinistre.

Enchaînée à un rocher, un certain Prométhée se faisait dévorer le foie par un vautour.

Assaillies, les vaches burent le sang qui coulait de la blessure et un peu plus tard, en foulant sous la mousse, elles se régalaient de quelques champignons.

Retrouvées par Hermès, elles furent traitées comme à l'habitude pour faire du beurre avec leur lait. Quelques temps plus tard, Hermès fit une halte à Rome pour reprendre des forces en grignotant une tartine beurrée qu'il fit goûter à un romain curieux

Kuwaitis to invest \$300m in Syria

DAMASCUS (R) — The finance minister of the toppled Kuwaiti government said Friday his country would invest more than \$300 million in Syria, which is backing multinational efforts to force Iraq out from Kuwait.

Sheikh Ali Al Khalifa Al Sabah told a news conference several projects were under discussion and are expected to be approved very soon.

The minister, who signed a \$165 million soft loan Thursday to finance a sanitation project in Damascus, said a company owned by Kuwait would be sent soon to invest in industrial, agricultural and economic projects in Syria.

He said Kuwait would also contribute towards financing a number of projects in the next three years including the expansion of Damascus' telephone network.

The Kuwaiti Development Fund would also extend a \$25 million loan to help small investors set up projects to contribute towards development in the country.

Madrid to expand credit line to Rabat

RABAT (R) — Spain will expand a line of credit to Morocco from \$1.3 to \$1.57 billion for the period up to the end of 1992, Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez said Friday at the end of a 24-hour visit to Morocco.

He said a project to build a pipeline carrying Algerian natural gas across Morocco to Spain would be launched in the near future. "I think it will advance very quickly," he said.

The linking of the Spanish and Moroccan electricity grids and telecommunication networks was also discussed, he added.

Spanish sources said other topics included joint ventures, particularly in sea fishing, and industrial investments in the phosphate sector, the mainstay of the Moroccan economy.

A joint declaration said they were both determined to build either a bridge or a tunnel across the Straits of Gibraltar.

But Bolger said the state of the economy allowed no alternative to the "human factor."

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Saturday, December 22, 1990					
Central Bank official rates					
Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell		
U.S. dollar	664.0	668.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	499.9	492.8
Pound Sterling	1252.3	1259.8	Dutch guilder	385.0	387.3
Deutschmark	434.1	436.7	Swedish crown	116.2	116.9
Swiss franc	506.2	509.2	Italian lira (for 100)	57.8	58.1
French franc	127.8	128.6	Belgian franc (for 10)	210.0	211.3

Canadian bankruptcies soar, manufacturing output slows

OTTAWA (R) — After seven years of relentless growth the Canadian economy is in retreat, with soaring bankruptcies and a slowing in manufacturing output, according to figures released recently.

Canadian bankruptcies rose 60 per cent in November to 6,009 from 3,763 in the same month a year ago, Canada's Consumer and Corporate Affairs Department reported.

It also said that Canada's manufacturing plant utilization fell 1.4 per cent to 78 per cent of capacity in the third quarter.

Opposition parties and economists are increasingly worried that Canada's recession might be deeper and more prolonged than first feared.

"We recognise that the economy is in recession and we have reduced interest rates since the spring of this year," he noted.

But the chief economist of the prestigious think tank, the Conference Board of Canada, warned that interest rates need to be reduced much more to avoid a sharp contraction.

"Without some relief on the interest rate front, I have major concerns that this recession will turn out to be much more severe than we currently expect," economist James Frank said in a Conference Board publication.

Frank said the Canadian economy has already deteriorated faster than anticipated and the

consumer spending and externally by high demand for cars, resources and wheat exports, began to contract in the second quarter of this year.

Finance Minister Michael Wilson said the government will continue to work towards lowering interest rates further to spur the economy.

"We recognise that the economy is in recession and we have reduced interest rates since the spring of this year," he noted.

But the chief economist of the Conference Board of Canada, warned that interest rates need to be reduced much more to avoid a sharp contraction.

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Frank said the Canadian economy has already deteriorated faster than anticipated and the

Gulf crisis was clouding the outlook. Consumer confidence is already low and the government's seven per cent consumption tax which goes into effect in January will only add to the problem.

In our outlook, all major

components of consumer spending shrink in the first quarter of 1991, except automobile spending, which increase after three quarters of decline," Frank said.

He said the government's budget deficit will mean little relief for consumers in the new budget, expected in February.

Canada's central bank has begun easing rates. Earlier this month, the Bank of Canada rate, similar to the U.S. discount rate, fell to its lowest level in nearly two years, dropping to 12.01 per cent from 12.16 per cent.

But Frank said the central bank, with its aim to eradicate inflation, probably kept rates too high for too long.

He said record cereal harvests in 1990 of nearly 2,000 million tonnes — four per cent up on 1989 — had helped develop countries, but left parts of Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean still struggling with hunger.

The harvest would allow cereal stocks to be replenished, but there remained an urgent need to mobilise international assistance for needy areas.

Ethiopia and Sudan, hit by year of civil war, would require massive assistance to avoid famine in 1991, the FAO chief said.

Other African nations that would need help next year could include Angola, Mozambique, Liberia and some in the Sahel.

Saouma said the breakdown of GATT trade negotiations because of squabbles on agricultural subsidies would hurt developing countries' trade by restrictions and fierce competition.

FAO asks rich states to bridge N-S gap

ROME (R) — The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has said Friday that the gap between developed and poor countries was widening.

Its director-general, Edouard Saouma, called for more food aid to African nations threatened by famine.

"If the world has been capable of breaking down the political barrier between East and West, it should be able to attack the economic divide between North and South," Saouma said in a year-end message on the state of world food and agriculture.

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Studies urge Soviets to make fast, concrete shift to market system

additional financial resources would be of little or no lasting value."

The study recommended price liberalisation — letting prices ebb and flow with the forces of demand. But rents and prices of few essential consumer goods may need to be subsidised to a limited extent over the near term, it added.

In a separate study also released Friday, the European Commission said the Soviet economy "will drift toward collapse" without major reform.

Moscow will need between \$8 billion and \$11 billion next year in aid, even after the \$15 billion in assistance already pledged, said the study by the commission.

Meanwhile trade experts said

Friday the resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze may cause U.S. companies to be even more cautious about investing in the Soviet Union.

Shevardnadze's surprise announcement Thursday, and his grim warning that the country was slipping toward "dictatorship," unnerved many world leaders. In currency markets, the Deutschmark, has been harmed by fears that Germany's economy could be hurt by Soviet unrest.

Most of the several hundred U.S. companies pursuing Soviet ventures have moved cautiously

in the Soviet situation deteriorates.

In fact, Atlantic Richfield Friday said it had signed preliminary agreements for exploration and production of oil and gas in the Soviet far east.

Corporate executives will be

watching closely over the next several weeks to see how the political turmoil in the Soviet Union is resolved.

N. Zealand cuts deep into welfare spending to revitalise economy

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand's new National Party government has slashed welfare spending by 10 per cent, cutting payments to children, the ill and the unemployed to breathe life into a sickly economy.

The government in a mini-budget also announced sweeping changes to labour laws, including outlawing compulsory trade union membership, to make New Zealand business more competitive.

The package was welcomed by financial markets but denounced by the Council of Trade Unions as being anti-worker.

Unemployment, sickness and child benefits will all be cut while across-the-board family allowances will go altogether.

"Now we must confront the hard decisions that have been delayed too long," Prime Minister Jim Bolger told parliament.

"Short term sacrifices and some, major long term, adjustments are both necessary if we are to succeed in the battle for economic growth and a return to full employment," he said.

In the mini-budget, announced less than two months after sweeping to power by a landslide, the government lopped 1.28 billion dollars (\$760 million) or 10 per cent off its welfare spending for the 1991/92 financial year.

Bolger said the state of the economy allowed no alternative to the "human factor."

Yugoslavia freezes foreign exchange dealings

BELGRADE (AP) — The federal government Friday froze sales of foreign currencies for dinar and imposed limits on cash Yugoslav can take out of the country, the finance minister announced.

The government ordered banks to limit over-the-counter sales of foreign currencies for dinar to the equivalent of 1,000 Deutschmarks (\$650). Yugoslav travelling abroad would not be permitted to carry exceeding that amount, Finance Minister Branimir Zekan told a news conference.

But he said the government decree "practically suspends all sale of foreign exchange to citizens," except for when funds are needed urgently for health or legal reasons.

The decree was designed to halt speculators drawing "excessive" foreign exchange from banks in anticipation of a dinar devaluation and transferring such funds abroad, Zekan said.

Federal Premier Ante Markovic made the dinar newly convertible Jan. 1 by pegging it at seven-to-one rate to Deutschmark as part of a sweeping economic reform package.

The reforms slashed runaway inflation from 2,500 per cent in 1989 to a projected 100 per cent this year, boosted the country's foreign exchange reserves and helped restore Yugoslav's confidence in the dinar.

But Yugoslavs, apparently unnerved by the country's uncertain political and economic future, have crowded banks in recent weeks to withdraw their hard currency savings.

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Walesa sworn in as president

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Lech Walesa, the shipyard electrician who led the workers' movement that overthrew Poland's Communist rulers, took the oath of office Saturday as his country's first popularly elected president.

The 47-year-old labour activist and Nobel Peace Prize laureate, the son of impoverished peasants, assumed the country's highest office at an inauguration before both houses of parliament.

Ten years after he led the shipyard strike that created Solidarity, the East Bloc's first independent trade union, and one year since he put together its first non-Communist government in more than 40 years, Walesa faces the challenge of transforming Poland into the prosperous, democratic society dreamed of by generations of his compatriots.

"I solemnly swear to the Polish people that I will be faithful to constitutional decisions," said Walesa, in a firm, clear voice, holding up his right hand.

"I will protect the dignity of the nation, the sovereignty and security of the state, I swear... So help me God."

His wife, Danuta, stood at his side as the oath was administered by parliament speaker Mikolaj Kozakiewicz.

The departing president, Gen.

Wojciech Jaruzelski, was not invited to attend the swearing-in ceremony.

In December 1981, Jaruzelski, then Communist Party leader, led the martial law crackdown that suppressed Solidarity and resulted in Walesa's internment for 11 months. Solidarity regained its legal status in 1989 after extensive negotiations between the Communist authorities and the opposition led by Walesa.

The transfer of power was to be conferred later Saturday by Ryszard Kaczorowski, president of the anti-Communist government-in-exile that has been based in London since the Warsaw government fled the Nazis in 1939.

Kaczorowski, returning to his homeland for the first time, is to give Walesa an insignia of office and other prewar symbols of power in a ceremony at the royal castle, where Poland's first democratic constitution was written in 1791.

Walesa also will accept the blessing of the Roman Catholic Church, with a mass to be celebrated in honour of his presidency by Cardinal Jozef Glemp.

As president, Walesa's first task will be to nominate a prime minister and prepare for parliamentary elections.

Walesa announced Thursday that he will not be able to name a



Lech Walesa

prime minister until after the Christmas and New Year holidays.

He said he is wavering between two options: keeping a remodeled caretaker cabinet until parliamentary elections in the spring or creating an all-new cabinet that will rule for a year until elections are held.

In statements since his landslide election on Dec. 9, Walesa has emphasised that his presidency will mark the culmination of a struggle to throw off foreign domination.

"We will lift our country up with the effort of the whole nation," Walesa pledged at a gathering to honour dozens of workers gunned down 20 years

ago during anti-government strikes. "We will fulfil the last wish of those killed."

But for the past centuries, free Poland has existed more in literature and song than in reality. Since 1795, Poland has enjoyed only 21 years of independence from foreign rule.

Walesa's critics fear he will rule in an iron-handed way and compare him to Marshal Jozef Pilsudski, who after a 1926 military takeover, allowed the trappings of democracy to continue but ruled as military commander.

Walesa won his office with 75 per cent of the vote, but the bitter election campaign split the Solidarity movement, leaving Walesa alienated from Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and many of his former advisers.

After the ceremony, deputies rose to their feet and burst into prolonged applause as Walesa blinked back tears as the national anthem was played.

"From this moment solemnly begins the Third Polish Republic," Walesa said.

The evil period is ending when the authorities of our state were chosen under foreign pressure or as a result of forced compromises.

"Today we take a fundamental step on the long and bloody road to rebuilding our independence."

Shekhar offers fresh hopes of ending violence

NEW DELHI (R) — India's new prime minister held out fresh hopes Saturday of ending secessionist and religious violence dividing the country but offered no quick solutions.

India's most pressing problems are independence movements in two states bordering Pakistan — Kashmir and Punjab — and Hindu-Muslim fighting over whether a mosque occupies a sacred Hindu site.

"I am prepared to discuss (the Punjab issue) with anyone who speaks to me as an Indian," said Chandra Shekhar, whose minority government took power last month.

He told a news conference the government was even prepared to amend the constitution if it would help. "I am not against any discussion... we want to make a plan for Punjab with the consultation of the people of Punjab," he said.

But he said the response so far from the wealthy agricultural state, where Sikhs have for a decade been trying to set up on their own, had been less positive than that in Kashmir.

The situation was gradually improving in Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state, where there had been a positive response from secessionist militants though he said it was still too early to hold elections there. Kashmir remains a thorn in India's relations with Pakistan, which it claims supports the rebels, and the two sides made no progress on the issue in talks in the week in Islamabad.

India has also accused Pakistan of training and arming Sikh militants in Punjab. More than 3,500 people have died in Punjab and a further 2,000 in Kashmir in separatist violence this year.

Shekhar made clear he wanted better relations with Pakistan, with which India has had three wars since independence from Britain in 1947, two of them about Kashmir.

"I want that relations with Pakistan should be true... the world is changing. If India and Pakistan want to play a role in this, they should settle their problems in a peaceful manner." On Hindu-Muslim violence, he said: "Pakistan should be true... the world is changing. If India and Pakistan want to play a role in this, they should settle their problems in a peaceful manner."

It said that 16 deputies representing Croatia's 500,000-member Serbian minority walked out of the parliamentary session before the vote to protest what they claimed was the failure of the document to guarantee their national identity.

The Communist government of Serbia, the largest of Yugoslavia's six constituent republics, has strongly opposed moves toward secession.

Also Friday, ethnic Serbs in Knin, a town near the central Adriatic coast, proclaimed the autonomy of Krajina, the mostly Serbian area in which they live, saying it would remain part of Croatia only if the state stays within Yugoslavia.

"This is a great day for all Serbs," said Jovan Raskovic, political leader of the Serbian minority, as he raised the Serbian flag over Knin Castle, Radio Belgrade reported.

Ethnic Serbs, who claim the Croatian authorities are discriminating against them, say if Croatia secedes from Yugoslavia, Krajina will declare its independence.

In a separate development, Chandra Shekhar said Saturday he wanted problems with Pakistan to be resolved peacefully and was not worried whether Delhi's old foes possessed nuclear weapons.

"I want that relations with Pakistan should be true," Shekhar told a news conference.

"The world is changing. If India and Pakistan want to play a role in this, they should settle their problems in a peaceful manner."

Asked about Pakistani nuclear capabilities, Shekhar said: "Even if they have the bomb there is no reason to be worried about it. Nobody is going to use it."

Senior Indian political sources quoted intelligence reports as saying Pakistan had at least seven nuclear bombs and had changed its strategy for their use from last resort to a pre-emptive strike.

Islamabad believes India, which exploded a nuclear device in 1974, has nuclear bombs.

Both countries deny having nuclear weapons.

Relations between the neighbours, which have fought three wars since independence from Britain in 1947, deteriorated again this year over a revolt in Jammu and Kashmir.

Radical S. African black leader criticises talks

CAPE TOWN (Agencies) — The leader of the small, radical Azanian People's Organisation opened his group's tenth annual congress Saturday by criticising negotiations with the white-led government.

AZAPO is a black consciousness group that believes South African blacks must work together for their liberation without help from the dominant white minority.

The ANC accuses Buthelezi of aligning himself with the government and instigating black factionalism in a bid to spread his power base beyond the eastern Natal province, the traditional Zulu homeland.

Inkatha accuses the ANC of trying to dominate the black opposition movement.

Meanwhile anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela has held talks with De Klerk in defiance of an African National Congress (ANC) ban on secret meetings with the white government, a newspaper reported Saturday.

The Johannesburg Star said Mandela met De Klerk last Monday, a day after the ANC ended its first consultative conference and a day before De Klerk's hardline year-end address to the nation in which he lashed out at the ANC.

De Klerk accused Mandela and the ANC of resorting to "outdated rhetoric and policies that fan the flames of confrontation" after the movement gave his government an April 30 deadline to stop township violence, release political prisoners and allow exiles to return.

If these conditions were not met, the ANC warned it would cancel all peace talks with the government and resume guerrilla activities.

At the ANC conference, the first in 30 years inside South Africa, delegates resolved that contact with the government would take place "without secrecy and confidentiality" and only after consultation with the organisation's policy-making 36-member National Executive Committee (NEC).

However an angry Mandela told the closing session of the conference secret and confidential meetings were at times essential.

He accused ANC members opposed to secret meetings as lacking understanding of the nature of negotiations, adding that had such meetings not taken place before, there would be no preliminary negotiations for a non-racial constitution.

COLUMN

Doctor cuts nose off husband's suspected lover

MANILA (R) — A Philippine woman doctor has been charged with cutting off the nose of a maid she suspected of having an affair with her husband. Her husband, also a doctor, was charged with raping the 18-year-old maid at gunpoint at their home in Capetown.

Meanwhile anti-apartheid leader Nelson Mandela has held talks with De Klerk in defiance of an African National Congress (ANC) ban on secret meetings with the white government, a newspaper reported Saturday.

White House bomb scare turns up something smelly

WASHINGTON (AP) — The secret service sealed the entrance to the White House for an hour Thursday after an explosives-sniffing dog detected something amiss in a congressional car. It turned out to be fertilizer.

"Great fun," said Rep. Herbert H. Bateman, after a bomb specialist wearing a flak jacket and a protective helmet combed through his car. Bateman was in a group of Congress members just back from Saudi Arabia and was meeting with the president. The northwest gate to the White House, the official entrance used by visitors to the president, was closed. The driveway where Bateman's car and about a dozen other congressional cars were parked was sealed off. Reporters were ordered to leave the grounds and kept in the nearby press briefing room as Bateman's car was carefully examined.

He accused ANC members opposed to secret meetings as lacking understanding of the nature of negotiations, adding that had such meetings not taken place before, there would be no preliminary negotiations for a non-racial constitution.

Father of 3 wins shouting contest

TOKYO (AP) — A 36-year-old father of three turned out to have the strongest lungs Thursday, winning a shouting contest with a roar louder than a passing train.

"If you want a war, you go," Yoshihiko Kato shouted. The sound metre registered 115.8 decibels, more than 15 per cent louder than the racket of a train passing overhead on an elevated railroad. For that, the self-employed Kato, who admitted he probably built his voice shouting at his children, won the 100,000 yen (\$716) grand prize of the 10th Annual Halls Year-End Loud Voice Contest. Kato didn't explain the content of his yell. Some thought it was directed against the Japanese government, which headed strong opposition and dropped a proposal to send troops for non-combat roles with multinational forces deployed against Iraq.

Pashko said rationing, now imposed on meat and butter, might soon have to be extended to sugar, rice bread and other essential items.

"We have a crisis of shortages," he said. "If the situation runs out of control it could be the end of the young democracy."

Shortages have been aggravated by three years of drought, which not only harmed crops but also eliminated Albania's earnings from hydro-electricity.

Pashko blamed riots a week ago in several Albanian towns on "dark forces" who included ultra-conservative Communists opposed to reform and criminal elements including black marketeers, who feared a democratic legal system.

The newspaper of the ruling (Communist) Party of Labour, Zeri I Popullit, carried a report that the sound metre registered 115.8 decibels, more than 15 per cent louder than the racket of a train passing overhead on an elevated railroad. For that, the self-employed Kato, who admitted he probably built his voice shouting at his children, won the 100,000 yen (\$716) grand prize of the 10th Annual Halls Year-End Loud Voice Contest. Kato didn't explain the content of his yell. Some thought it was directed against the Japanese government, which headed strong opposition and dropped a proposal to send troops for non-combat roles with multinational forces deployed against Iraq.

The article assured them that their savings, or the interest on them, could be withdrawn at any time. Informed Albanian sources said many citizens feared accounts could be frozen because of the economic crisis.

Monroe's marriage contract fetches \$14,000

LONDON (R) — Marilyn Monroe's marriage contract to U.S. playwright Arthur Miller fetched more than \$14,000, Christie's auctioneers said. The Ketubah, a Jewish wedding contract dated July 1, 1956, was witnessed in New York by Lee Strasberg, founder of New York's Actors Studio. Monroe converted to Judaism for the marriage, Miller's second and third wife, which caused a sensation in Hollywood. They divorced in 1961.

The price, paid by an anonymous buyer, was at the upper range of Christie's estimate. The certificate was offered for sale by the executors of her estate. The Hollywood star and sex symbol died in her Los Angeles home of a self-inflicted drug overdose in the summer of 1962. She was 36.

At the sale of Hollywood memorabilia, Indiana Jones' kangaroo hide whip sold for more than double its estimate of some \$25,000 to a Parisian cafe owner. A wallet owned by 1950s film star James Dean was the third most expensive item at just over \$12,000.

Manila foils Christmas bomb plot

REYNALDO ORDONEZ, an escaped army captain and three followers who sneaked into an airbase with dynamite wrapped up as Christmas gifts to try to blow up planes in a signal for a coup, the military said Saturday.

Ordonez was sentenced to 12 years in prison and ordered dishonourably discharged. The three other men were an army private and two civilians.

Loyalist troops were tipped off in advance and arrested the four when they tried to mingle with guests at the base, some 80 kilometres north of Manila. Bazon said.

Intelligence information states that the operation in Baza would serve as a signal for the next coup attempt," said Bazon, named by President Corazon Aquino Friday as new

Cambodian National Council resumes talks

PARIS (AP) — The Supreme National Council, representing Cambodia's Vietnamese-backed government and three guerrilla factions, resumed talks Saturday to consider a U.N.-sponsored peace plan.

Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, who fell ill during the first day of talks Friday, was expected to rejoin the meeting of the 12-member council.

The talks were to conclude later Saturday.

French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, addressing Friday's opening session, warned that time was running out to reach a settlement and urged acceptance of the plan that would give the

Japanese appointed head of UNHCR

TOKYO (R) — The newly appointed United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said Saturday that being a Japanese and a woman being appointed to the job.

The appointment of a woman was "an interesting development," she said. "But maybe it was overdue."

Ogata is the first woman to hold the top refugee post and only the second Japanese to head a U.N. agency, after Hiroshi Nakajima of the World Health Organisation. Her appointment was approved by the General Assembly Friday.

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The world's refugees had increased from about eight million to 15 million in the past decade, Ogata said.

"Certainly, I have a slightly broader background, and I should have wider clients," Ogata said when asked what she thought of a Japanese woman being appointed to the job.

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Washington, citing abuses, cuts off aid to Guatemala

WASHINGTON (R) — A largely symbolic cut of U.S. military aid to Guatemala was triggered by Washington's disappointment over the Central American country's failure to solve the murder of an American and a lack of commitment to human rights, U.S. officials have said.

The United States Friday cut off military aid to Guatemala, charging that the government of President Vinicio Cerezo was not doing enough to stamp out human rights abuses. Military aid totalled about \$2.9 million in the 1990 fiscal year.

In announcing the cutoff, the U.S. State Department did not charge the Cerezo government with taking part in the abuses.

The government hopes that this drastic action against Guatemala over the killing of an American citizen does not constitute further misunderstanding by the U.S. State Department.